the weekly Standard

MARCH 22, 2004

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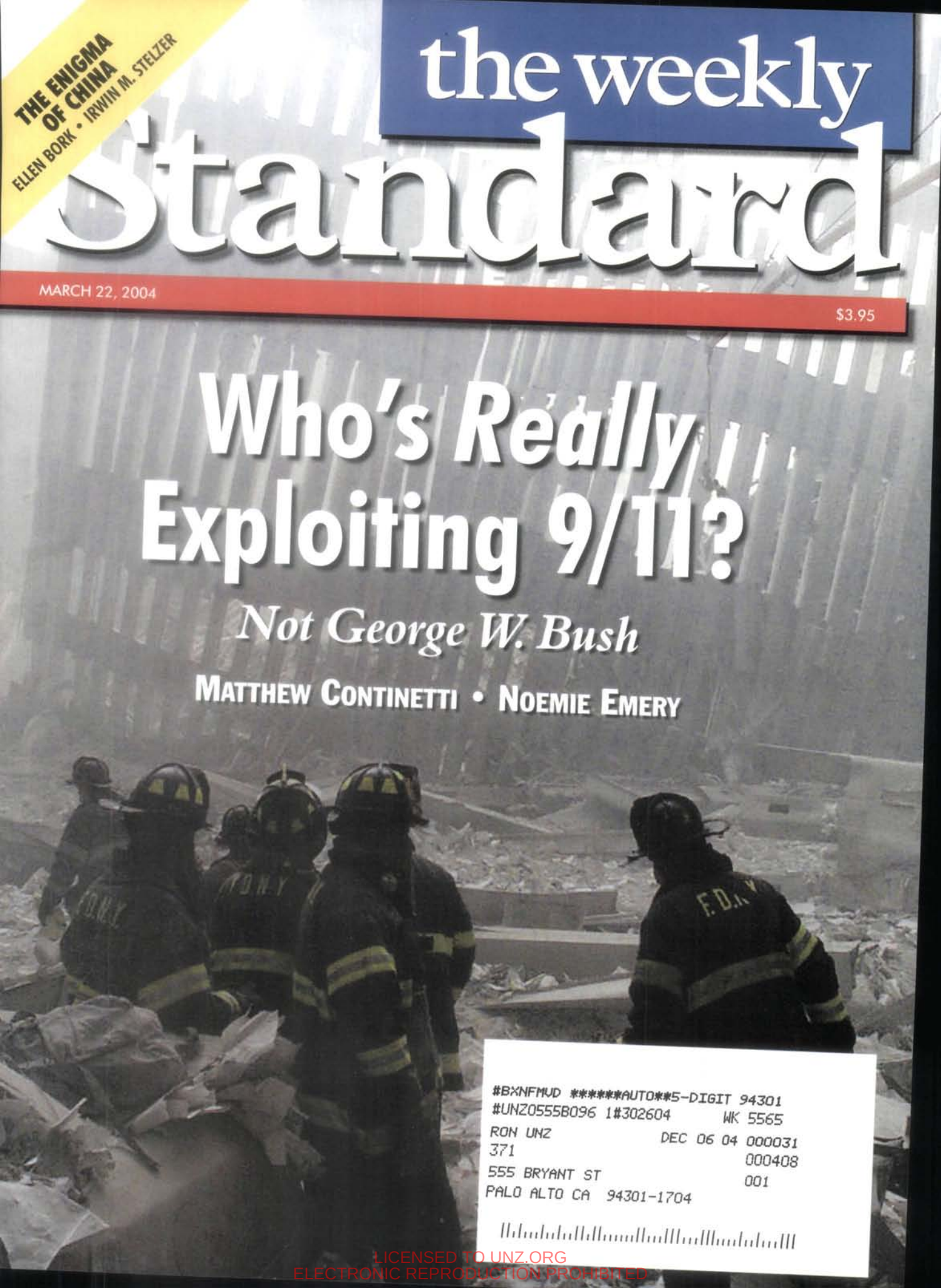
THE ENIGMA OF CHINA
ELLEN BORK • IRWIN M. STELZER

Who's Really Exploiting 9/11?

Not George W. Bush

MATTHEW CONTINETTI • NOEMIE EMERY



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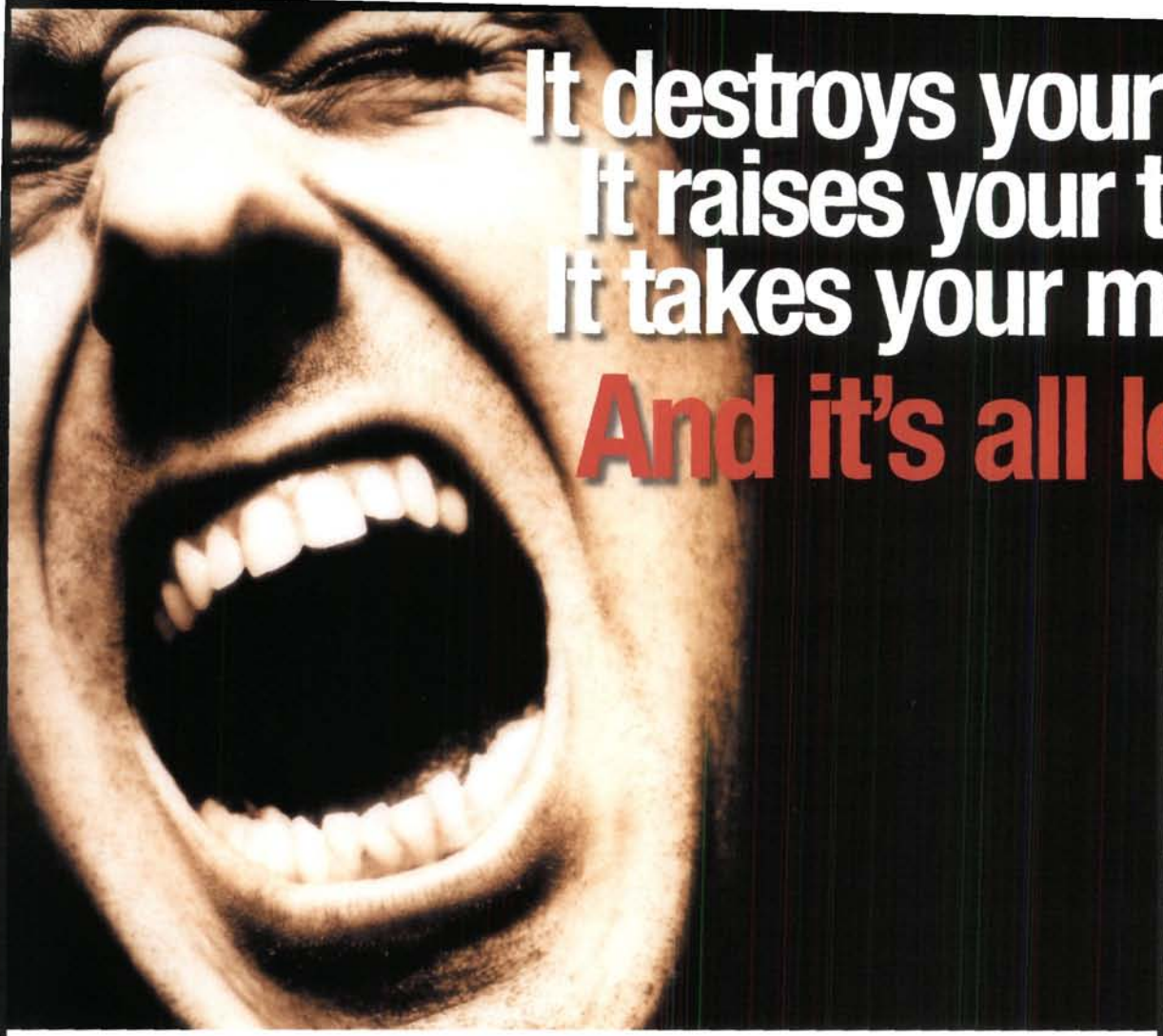

It destroys your jobs. It raises your taxes. It takes your money. And it's all legal.

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Idaho	5
Utah	6
New Hampshire	7
Minnesota	8
Kansas	9
Wisconsin	10
Indiana	11
Maine	12
Colorado	13
Arizona	14
Wyoming	15
North Dakota	16
South Dakota	17
Connecticut	18
North Carolina	19
Vermont	20
Maryland	21
New York	22
Michigan	23
Washington	24
Tennessee	25
New Jersey	26
Oregon	27
Massachusetts	28
Georgia	29
Pennsylvania	30
Oklahoma	31
Ohio	32
Alaska	33
Nevada	34
Kentucky	35
Rhode Island	36
New Mexico	37
Florida	38
Hawaii	39
South Carolina	40
Missouri	41
Arkansas	42
Montana	43
Illinois	44
Texas	45
California	46
Louisiana	47
Alabama	48
West Virginia	49
Mississippi	50

*A December 2003 Tillinghast Towers Perrin study estimated the cost of the U.S. tort system to be $233 billion in 2002, or $809 per U.S. citizen.

Paid for by the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform, 1615 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20062-2000

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Contents

March 22, 2004 • Volume 9, Number 27

2 Scrapbook . . . *The New Pentagon Papers and Carl Levin.*

4 Casual . . . . . *Tina Winston, bystander in Madrid.*

6 Correspondence . . . . . *On cardiac care and Comanches.*

9 Editorials . . . . . *Iraq One Year Later*
From 9/11 to 3/11

Articles

12 Ads Hominem *The 9/11-related attacks on Bush began long before his campaign ads.* . . . . . BY NOEMIE EMERY

15 The Colossus of Sacramento *Schwarzenegger takes care of business.* . . . . . BY FRED BARNES

16 And Now for the Bad News . . . *Trouble ahead for the U.S.-China relationship.* . . . . . BY ELLEN BORK

18 The Freshman They Love to Hate *She's running for the Senate—but not this year.* . . . . . BY RACHEL DICARLO

19 Human Rights and Wrongs *Don't have high hopes for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.* . . . BY JOSEPH LOCONTE

Cover: Reuters / Landov / P. Morgan

Features

24 How to Stage a Controversy
The manufactured flap over Bush's 9/11 ads. . . . . . BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

29 The Sleeping Giant Wakes
The consequences of China's growth. . . . . . BY IRWIN M. STELZER

34 Against All Odds
A flourishing democracy takes root in South Africa. . . . . . BY MAX BOOT

Books & Arts

39 Human, All-Too-Human *The Bioethics Council issues a book of readings.* . . . . . BY GREGORY FEELEY

41 Husbanding Men *Dr. Laura sees where feminism went astray.* . . . . . BY TAMMY BRUCE

43 Generalissimo *How Chiang Kai-shek won and lost China—and why it still matters.* . . . . . BY DAVID LOWE

45 Thus Spake Elisabeth *The will to power of Friedrich Nietzsche's sister.* . . . . . BY CHRISTIAN D. BROSE

47 THE STANDARD READER . . . . . *Fred Barnes on* Allies *and Noemie Emery on* Sons of Camelot.

48 Parody . . . . . *Protecting human rights in Saudi Arabia.*

William Kristol, *Editor* **Fred Barnes**, *Executive Editor*
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Teddy Kennedy's New Expert

The hottest foreign policy authority on the left is Karen Kwiatkowski, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel who worked for several months in the Pentagon's Near East-South Asia office during the run-up to the war in Iraq. She was prominently cited by Senator Ted Kennedy in a March 5 address to the Council on Foreign Relations questioning the president's use of prewar intelligence on Iraq. Her work is getting the full promotional treatment from *Salon* and its new Washington Bureau chief Sidney Blumenthal, the former head conspiratorialist of the Clinton White House. *Salon* celebrated the opening of the new bureau by publishing a heavily hyped Kwiatkowski opus headlined "The new Pentagon papers."

Kwiatkowski claims she witnessed "neoconservative agenda bearers within [the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans] usurp measured and carefully considered assessment, and through suppression and distortion of intelligence analysis promulgate what were in fact falsehoods to both Congress and the executive office of the president."

Whether she's a reliable witness is something her new patrons may or may not have inquired into. But Kennedy staffers may want to Google her work for the antiwar libertarians at *lewrockwell.com* as well as the pseudonymous pieces she's acknowledged publishing on *hackworth.com* and *Soldiers for the Truth* when she was still in uniform and working at the Department of Defense. They will find no evidence of Kwiatkowski's reliability as a judge of "measured and carefully considered assessment." They will find plenty of evidence that their boss could use a new speechwriter.

Consider: In her writings for *Soldiers for the Truth*, which ran under the heading "Deep Throat Returns," Kwiatkowski accused the Pentagon of planning to "build greater Zion" in the Middle East and decried the "Zionist political cult that has lassoed the E-Ring"—a reference to the Secretary of Defense and other high-ranking Pentagon officials.

In a later article on *lewrockwell.com*, written after she'd retired, Kwiatkowski conceded that these anonymous articles barely did justice to the frustration she'd experienced at the Pentagon: "Hard core anarchists and other purists might criticize me for not just throwing a few hand grenades over the office dividers and letting the chips fall where they may. But by this time I had already submitted my retirement request, and selfishly after my twenty [years of service], I wanted to spend the money, not time in Leavenworth."

Other gems from Kwiatkowski's oeuvre:

* "We went to war in Afghanistan—planned of course before 9/11/2001 due to some Taliban non-cooperation regarding a certain trans-Afghanistan oil pipeline, and the requisite security for said pipeline."

* "We once had something like a free market Republic, but all evidence now points to a maturing fascist state flexing its muscles."

* "Bush and his neoconservative foreign policy implementers believe they are today's men of destiny. But the claim of destiny for a whole nation or a constructed state has long been the ultimate tool of the fascist, the supernationalist, the propagandist worthy of a Lenin or a Hitler or a Pol Pot."

* "Two invasions and occupations in two years to reshape the Islamic world in preparation for World War IV is anything but conservative. Fascist imperialism touched by Sparta revived can never, even with pretty please and sugar on top, be conservatism."

Normally a collegial sort, THE SCRAPBOOK can't bring itself to congratulate *Salon* on the opening of its new bureau. ♦

Carl Levin's Faulty Memory

Carl Levin gave a typical performance during Senate Armed Services Committee hearings last week. With the exception of Ted Kennedy, Levin has been the most outspoken of the many Democrats who warned ominously about Iraq's WMD threat before the war and now accuse the Bush administration of making it all up.

Levin's thesis is simple: Warmongers in the Pentagon and the White House lied about intelligence to go to war. But Levin himself has been—there's no way to say it politely—less than honest about the same intelligence. At last week's hearing, he praised the "caution and the nuance" of the CIA's then-classified July 2002 assessment of the threat from Iraq and al Qaeda. Levin read it aloud:

> Baghdad, for now, appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or [chemical and biological weapons] against the United States. Fearing that exposure of Iraqi involvement would provide Washington a stronger cause for making war, Iraq probably would attempt clandestine attacks against the U.S. homeland if Baghdad feared an attack that threatened the survival of the regime were imminent or unavoidable, or possibly for revenge. Such attacks, more likely with biological than chemical agents, probably would be carried out by Iraq's special forces or intelligence operatives. Saddam, if sufficiently desperate, might decide that only an organization such as al Qaeda could

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perpetrate the type of terrorist attack that he would hope to conduct. In such circumstances, he might decide that the extreme step of assisting the Islamic terrorists in conducting a CBW attack against the United States would be his last chance to exact vengeance by taking a large number of victims with him.

Most people might think this was good and sufficient reason to take out Saddam. Levin refers to it as "the CIA's doubts about Iraq's collaboration with al Qaeda," and he complains that the assessment was "buried in classification from the public eye on the eve of our going to war."

Was it, really? Well, no.

On October 7, 2002, CIA Director George Tenet sent an unclassified letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee that committee Democrats hyped to the media. Because war was being considered, he said, "We have made unclassified material available to further the Senate's forthcoming open debate on a Joint Resolution concerning Iraq." Then, in unclassified language that alert readers will remember from three paragraphs ago, Tenet lays out the alleged doubts:

> Baghdad for now appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or [chemical and biological weapons] against the United States. Should Saddam conclude that a U.S.-led attack could no longer be deterred, he probably would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist actions. Such terrorism might involve conventional means, as with Iraq's unsuccessful attempt at a terrorist offensive in 1991, or CBW. Saddam might decide that the extreme step of assisting Islamist terrorists in conducting a WMD attack against the United States would be his last chance to exact vengeance by taking a large number of victims with him.

As Tenet's letter makes clear, the CIA's "doubts" were not "buried in classification" before the war. They were publicly available some six months before the war. Is it possible that Levin was simply unaware the information had been declassified—making him less a political prevaricator and more a clueless congressman? Possible? Yes. Likely? No. Levin is cited by name in Tenet's declassification letter. Not to mention, Levin has repeatedly mischaracterized the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda in his public statements. "The intel didn't say there was a direct relationship between al Qaeda and Iraq."

If "the intel" didn't make that claim, the Director of Intel came close. In the same Oct. 7 letter, Tenet wrote of "senior level contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda going back a decade." He wrote of "solid evidence of the presence in Iraq of al Qaeda members, including some that have been in Baghdad." The same "credible reporting" reveals that "Iraq has provided training to al Qaeda members in the areas of poisons and gases and making conventional bombs." Most striking, Tenet reported that "Baghdad's links to terrorists will increase, even absent U.S. military action."

Levin never mentions these assessments. He's right about one thing: Someone isn't being honest about prewar intelligence. ♦

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Casual

Murder in Madrid

We were running late. The law school classmate I had come to Spain with convinced me there was no way we would make our train. Around 8:45, we gave up and decided we would have to take a bus from Madrid to Toledo.

While we were getting ready, my friend turned on the television. There seemed to be something going on at the Atocha station. Using my modest Spanish, I figured out that there had been an explosion, with possible casualties.

That's when the sirens erupted. I opened the door to our balcony and heard them coming from every direction. I decided to go to the lobby and find out what was going on.

I found the hotel staff huddled around the check-in desk listening to the radio. I hesitated. The man behind the desk raised his head and stated flatly: Terrorism. My mind raced. I wanted to tell the people there that I understood their shock, disbelief, fear, and anger. The only thing I managed to say was, "*Lo siento*," I'm sorry.

Back in our room, we called the U.S. embassy and were told there was no reason to cancel our trip, so we headed out onto the streets of Old Madrid. Except for the occasional police car zipping past, it could have been an ordinary morning. The shops were open, people were walking their dogs, old ladies were strolling down the street arm in arm. But at the café where we stopped for breakfast, the television was reporting 23 deaths.

We started to make our way to the bus station. The police were closing all the metro entrances. As we passed through the Puerto del Sol, we saw people forming lines in the square. Apparently there had been a call for all *madrileños* to donate blood. For the next hour and a half we wended our way through cobblestone streets.

About halfway, we began to smell smoke. Though we tried to avoid the Atocha station, we found we had to pass directly in front of it. People were standing transfixed, behind barricades, straining to see what was going on across the street.

Reuters / Landov / Andrea Comas

The scene was filled with tension. There was nothing anyone could do but watch the smoke rising from the back of the building. As we walked, I felt like an intruder. We tried to make our way through the crowd quickly and respectfully.

There was no mass exodus from Madrid, as there was from Washington and New York on September 11, and our journey to Toledo passed without incident. It took an hour on a public bus.

When we arrived at our hotel, the woman behind the registration desk asked where we had come from. At the mention of Madrid, her smile was replaced by a look of anguish. The television screen behind her was flashing pictures of the injured, destroyed trains, and desperate onlookers searching for loved ones.

Sra. Esther Calatrava told us the death toll was now over 100. She gave us an impromptu lecture on the politics, history, and tactics of the Basque terrorist group, the ETA. This was unlike their prior attacks, she said: Today's actions amounted to war.

As the day progressed, the death count rose. Concerned relatives called from home. In an attempt at normalcy, we hopped on a tram that provides panoramic views for picture-taking tourists. The group next to us was from the Netherlands. They were very interested in our being Americans. They told us the latest reports said al Qaeda was involved in the bombing.

Our attempt at passing for tourists petered out. At all of the museums, we saw flyers posted on the doors that read, "For peace, say no to terrorism." The pain in my stomach would not go away. We decided to cut the day short and return to our room. I stayed glued to the television until three in the morning.

The images were all too familiar. There were wives holding up pictures of their missing husbands, begging for any kind of information. There were reports of unidentified people in hospitals, and uplifting stories of lost family members found. Just as we in America had our heroes of 9/11, so did Spain. Many people who lived close to the station heard the explosions and instantly went to help remove bodies from the wreckage. Ordinary citizens brought blankets from their homes to cover the dead. It wasn't long before the attack was being referred to as "11-M," for March 11.

Amidst the sights and memories, Sra. Calatrava's words kept returning to my mind: This is war. Terrorism is something we face in common. The reality is that it can affect us at any time or place. No matter what group turns out to be responsible or how many Americans were killed, we were all attacked on 11-M.

Tina Winston

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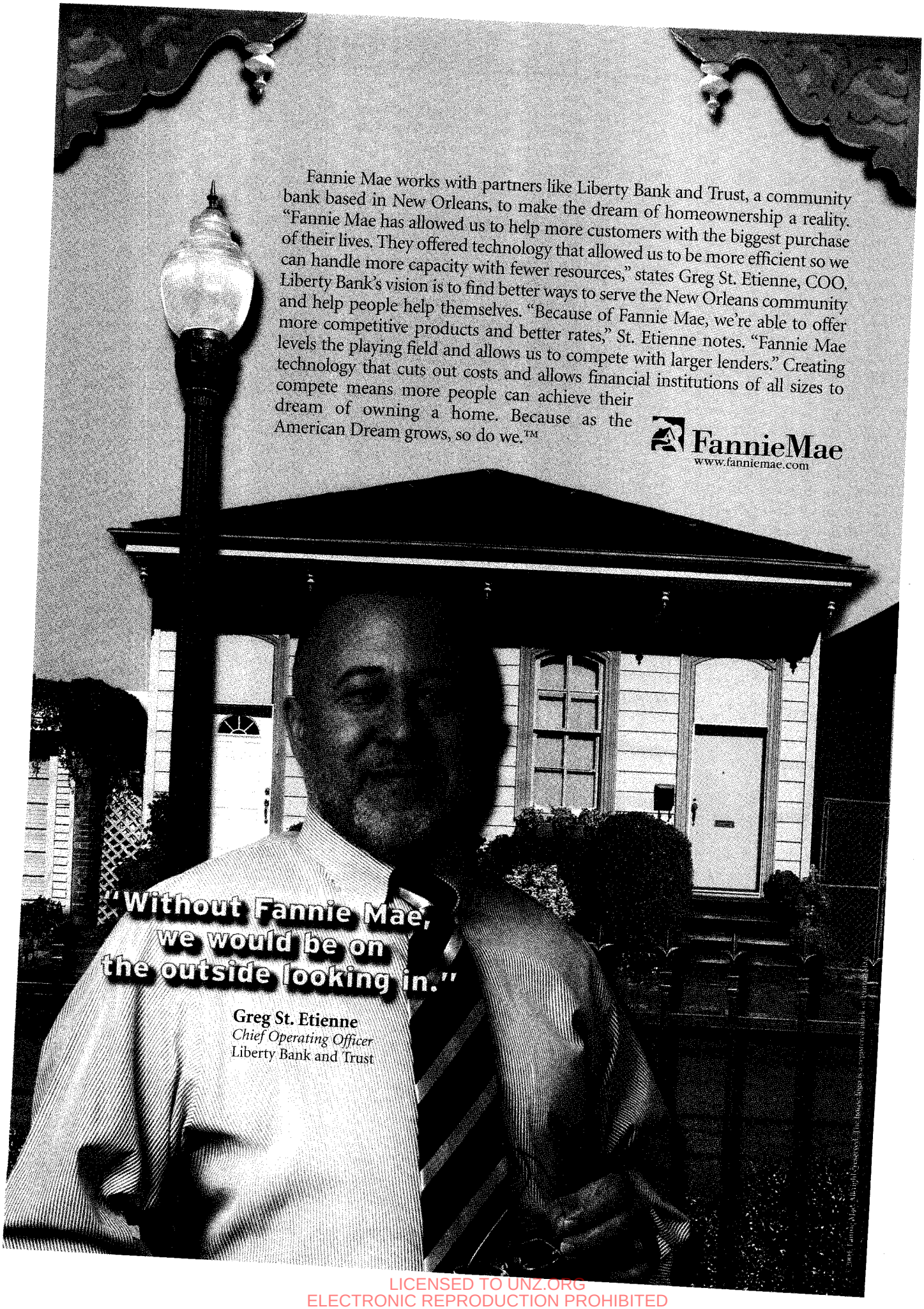

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Health Nut

In "Don't Despair Over Disparities" (March 1), Sally Satel and Jonathan Klick misquote the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) and the American College of Cardiology Foundation (ACCF) report on racial differences in cardiac care. The KFF/ACCF review of the evidence did *not* result in a finding that "the overwhelming majority of studies found no mortality differences between races despite lower rates of procedures for blacks," as reported by Satel and Klick.

We did report that the majority of studies (68 of the 81) found racial/ethnic differences in cardiac care for at least one of the minority groups included in each study. Racial/ethnic differences in care were found when examining all studies, as well as the subset of studies classified as the methodologically strongest. These latter studies are important because they controlled for critical variables (such as age, severity of heart disease, and insurance coverage) that could otherwise account for racial/ethnic differences in care.

The KFF/ACCF review did not assess health outcomes, such as mortality, related to cardiac care, in part because too few studies systematically addressed the issue to form a conclusion. The question of racial differences in the outcomes of cardiac care warrants further investigation, but that research should not delay the uniform application of guidelines for optimal cardiac care across racial/ethnic groups.

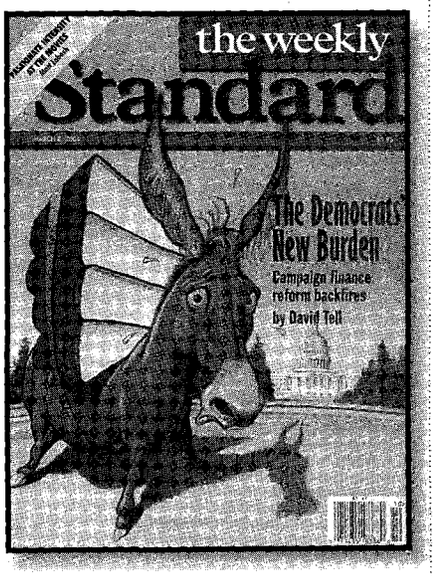
Marsha Lillie-Blanton
Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation
Washington, DC

Satel and Klick respond: Marsha Lillie-Blanton is right. Kaiser itself did not state that "the overwhelming majority found no mortality differences between races despite lower rates of procedures for blacks." We did. That's what we found when we examined the 11 studies cited in the report that specifically looked at mortality differences following cardiac procedures (in 9 of them mortality between white and black patients were comparable or less in blacks than whites; in 2, mortality was greater for black patients).

There's no question that more studies need to focus on morbidity and mortality outcomes. Such studies are invaluable to understand the meaning and impact of treatment differences.

American Chopper

John R. Guardiano may be right when he concludes in "A Fitting End for the Comanche" that terminating the Comanche helicopter program was necessary, given all the other needs confronting the U.S. Army (March 8). But that decision leaves open the question of what is to be done with U.S. aerial surveillance programs. Upgrading the Apache attack helicopter or older utility helicopters is important, but this will not



enhance the Army's tactical reconnaissance capabilities.

As Guardiano points out, investing in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) will be part of the solution. Army UAVs performed very well in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Innovative UAV concepts like the Fire Scout, an unmanned rotocraft based on the popular Schweizer helicopter that can take off and land vertically, are important projects ready for funding. Lots of the money saved on the Comanche program will have to be spent to develop and deploy UAVs.

But UAVs and armed helicopters will not be sufficient to provide the transformed Army with the surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities needed in the 21st century. Another system that the Army must acquire is the Aerial Common Sensor (ACS), a smallish commercial jet loaded with advanced sensors and communications gear. The ACS will replace several aging Army intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms.

Finally, with the cancellation of the Comanche, the United States has one and only one transformational rotocraft program left: the V-22 Osprey. This alone makes it important that the Osprey program proceed. Moreover, now that the redesigned V-22 is performing superbly in its congressionally mandated flight test program, it is time for the Army to consider acquiring it to support both near-term operations and the activities of the future force.

Dan Goure
Arlington, VA

John R. Guardiano responds: Dan Goure is right about the transformational significance of the V-22 Osprey transport rotocraft. However, he is mistaken when he says that "upgrading the Apache . . . will not enhance the Army's tactical reconnaissance capabilities."

Indeed, many of the same types of "advanced sensors and communications gear" that Goure touts as justification for the aerial common sensor can and will be used on the Apache Longbow. That's why both the aerial common sensor and Apache Longbow upgrades are important to the Army. As Gen. Cody himself explained: "The Longbow with full block III [upgrade] capability gives us all the digital connectivity, the battlefield awareness, the battlefield situational understanding that we would get with block I Comanche. . . . [Moreover], the fire-control radar on Longbow block III is the same fire-control radar [that would have been used on the] block I Comanche."

True, the Army will have to invest heavily in UAVs, which are costly. But because UAVs are a Pentagon priority that involves all of the services, the Army can capitalize on the military's entire UAV investment in a way that would not have been possible with Comanche. That's the beauty of joint, interservice procurements: They are more economical and beneficial since they exploit larger economies of scale. ♦

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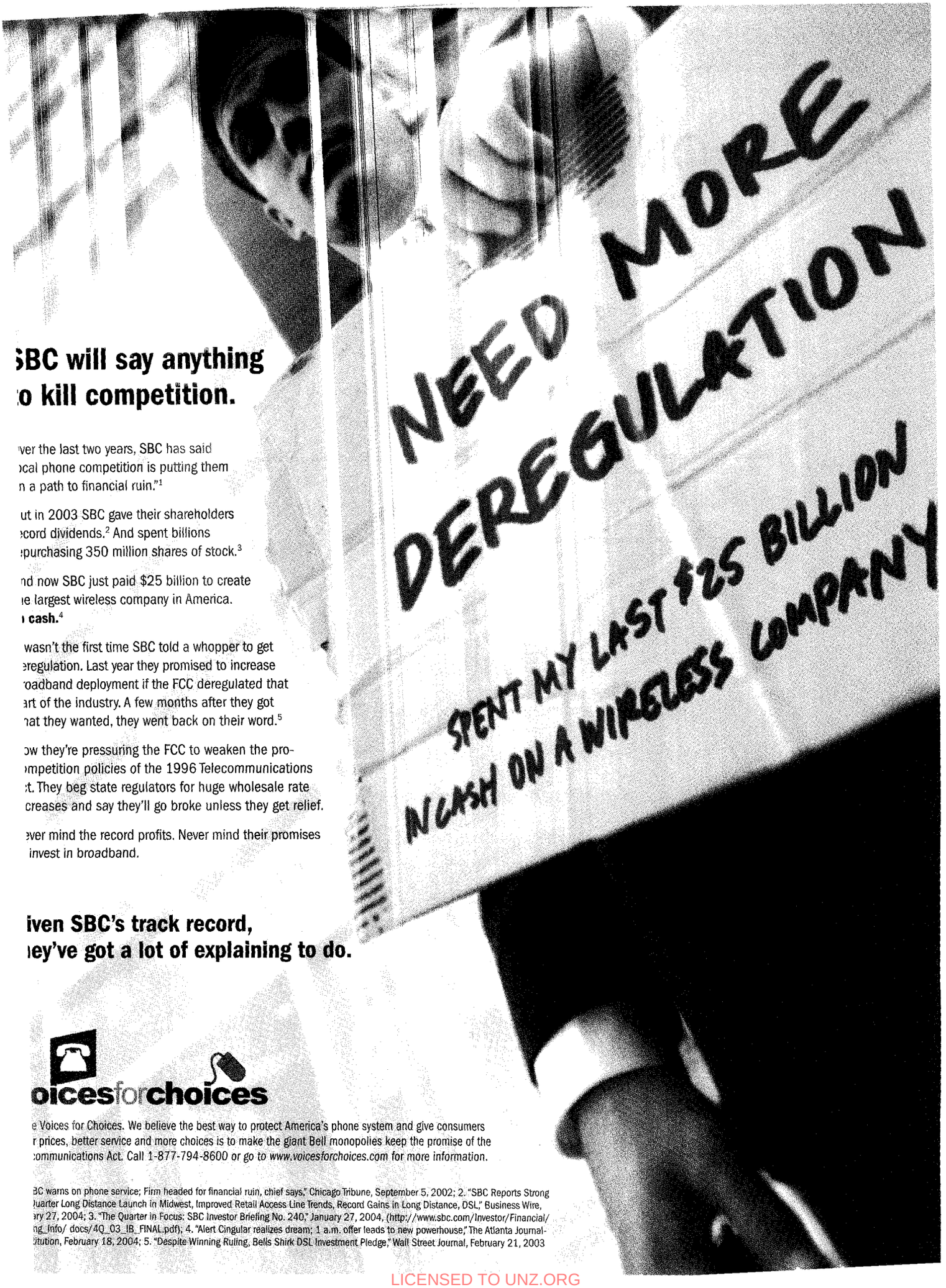

SBC will say anything to kill competition.

ver the last two years, SBC has said ocal phone competition is putting them n a path to financial ruin."[1]

ut in 2003 SBC gave their shareholders ecord dividends.[2] And spent billions epurchasing 350 million shares of stock.[3]

nd now SBC just paid $25 billion to create e largest wireless company in America. **cash.**[4]

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ow they're pressuring the FCC to weaken the pro-mpetition policies of the 1996 Telecommunications t. They beg state regulators for huge wholesale rate creases and say they'll go broke unless they get relief.

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iven SBC's track record, ey've got a lot of explaining to do.

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BC warns on phone service; Firm headed for financial ruin, chief says," Chicago Tribune, September 5, 2002; 2. "SBC Reports Strong uarter Long Distance Launch in Midwest, Improved Retail Access Line Trends, Record Gains in Long Distance, DSL," Business Wire, ry 27, 2004; 3. "The Quarter in Focus: SBC Investor Briefing No. 240," January 27, 2004, (http://www.sbc.com/Investor/Financial/ ng_Info/ docs/4Q_03_IB_FINAL.pdf); 4. "Alert Cingular realizes dream; 1 a.m. offer leads to new powerhouse," The Atlanta Journal-itution, February 18, 2004; 5. "Despite Winning Ruling, Bells Shirk DSL Investment Pledge," Wall Street Journal, February 21, 2003

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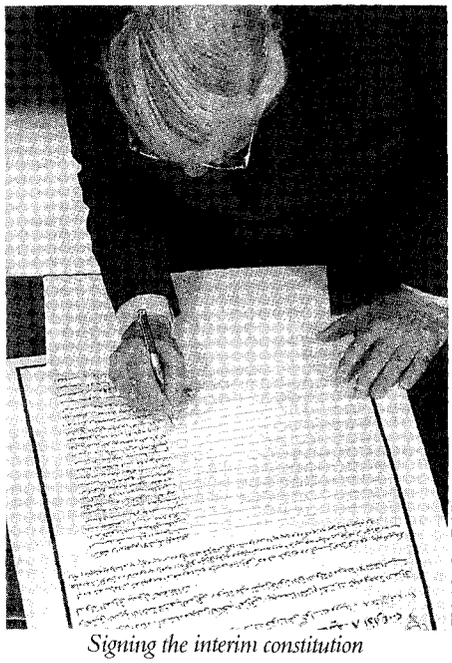
the weekly Standard

Iraq One Year Later

A year has passed since the invasion of Iraq, and while no sensible person would claim that Iraqis are safely and irrevocably on a course to liberal democracy, the honest and rather remarkable truth is that they have made enormous strides in that direction. The signing on March 8 of the Iraqi interim constitution—containing the strongest guarantees of individual, minority, and women's rights and liberties to be found anywhere in the Arab world—is the most obvious success. But there are other measures of progress, as well. Electricity and oil production in Iraq have returned to prewar levels. The capture of Saddam Hussein has damaged the Baathist-led insurgency, although jihadists continue to launch horrific attacks on Iraqi civilians. But by most accounts those vicious attacks have spurred more Iraqis to get more involved in building a better Iraq. We may have turned a corner in terms of security.



EPA / Stefan Zaklin

Signing the interim constitution

What's more, there are hopeful signs that Iraqis of differing religious, ethnic, and political persuasions can work together. This is a far cry from the predictions made before the war by many, both here and in Europe, that a liberated Iraq would fracture into feuding clans and unleash a bloodbath. The perpetually sour American media focus on the tensions between Shiites and Kurds that delayed the signing by three whole days. But the difficult negotiations leading up to the signing, and the continuing debates over the terms of a final constitution, have in fact demonstrated something remarkable in Iraq: a willingness on the part of the diverse ethnic and religious groups to disagree—peacefully—and then to compromise.

This willingness is the product of what appears to be a broad Iraqi consensus favoring the idea of pluralism. The interim constitution itself represents a promising compromise between the legitimate desire of the majority Shiites to be fairly represented in the Iraqi government—for the first time in a century—and the equally legitimate desire of Kurds and Sunnis to be protected from a tyranny of the majority. These are never easy matters to resolve, as our own Founders knew well. Add to these problems the vexing question of the role of Islam in Iraqi politics and society, and the complexities multiply. Yet here, too, the Iraqis seem to have struck a hopeful balance. Islam is respected in the constitution as the national religion. But that does not impinge on the basic rights of Iraqis, both Muslim and non-Muslim. This does not seem to be a Muslim theocracy in the making. Indeed, the way in which the Iraqi constitution reconciles liberal democracy with the culture and religion of Islam really is an encouraging and feasible model for others in the Islamic world.

A share of the credit for Iraq's achievements so far should go to the leading Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Sistani. He has of course consistently represented the interests of the long-oppressed Shiite majority. But he has also consistently supported liberal democratic processes and institutions in Iraq. Indeed, he has been more persistent in urging free and democratic elections than some top American officials, who for months put off elections out of fear of their possible consequences and tried to set up a clumsy system of "caucuses" to choose a constituent assembly. Now they have changed course and agree that real elections are both simpler and far preferable in conferring legitimacy on any Iraqi government or final constitution.

The administration's about-face on elections is one of several instances over the past year where American officials have had to recover from misjudgments about the reconstruction of Iraq. The first and most serious misjudgment concerned the level of American troops. Even though it was apparent by early summer 2003 that there were too few troops to provide security for the reconstruction effort, the administration remained committed to drawing down the number of forces. These plans along with other

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instances of apparent wavering led many people in the United States, in Europe, and most damaging of all in Iraq, to conclude last fall that the Bush administration was looking for an early exit. Fortunately, President Bush moved to squelch all talk of an exit strategy, and the number of American troops in Iraq has actually risen slightly. This has not only increased security but, just as importantly, has sent a powerful signal of U.S. determination to remain in Iraq as long as needed.

That is the key to success in Iraq. This administration did not do a particularly good job of preparing for postwar Iraq before the invasion, and it has not always made the right decisions on how to proceed politically, diplomatically, and militarily in the reconstruction of Iraq. But the mere fact that the White House has not sought an early exit timed to our presidential election has made it possible to recover from these mistakes—many of which, to be fair, are unavoidable in a complex undertaking like nation-building. Also to its credit, the administration has shown enough flexibility to abandon favored plans when they have proved unworkable. But the most important thing the administration has done is to make clear, both in word and in deed, its determination to see our mission in Iraq completed.

For this we believe President Bush deserves enormous credit, and perhaps sole credit. Everyone knew—or thought they knew—last fall that the politically expedient thing was to begin a serious drawdown of American forces. But the president has proven remarkably stubborn on the question of Iraq. He has not decreased troops in an election year. He has not offered the American people a plan for getting out this year or next year or offered any timetable at all. In fact, he has done nothing in Iraq to strengthen his political prospects at home, except perhaps to realize the deeper truth that he is better off in November if Iraq is better off, no matter how many American troops remain. On this question, at least, there should be no doubt that the president has so far put the national interest above political expediency.

We wish we could say the same of John Kerry. The fate of Iraq is so important that we would much prefer to have each candidate this fall trying to outbid the other on who would do the most to ensure success there. On the subject of Iraqi reconstruction, however, Kerry has been, at best, hard to pin down. At worst, he has pandered not only to the left wing of the his party but to Americans' worst instincts.

Kerry has frequently complained, for instance, about the costs of reconstruction. "The bill," he said in December, is "too large." And "Americans are paying it—in resources that could be used for health care, education, and our security here at home." "We should not be opening firehouses in Baghdad and closing them down in New York City." To be sure, he has uttered these complaints in the context of chastising the Bush administration for not getting more help from the international community. And, of course, in classic Kerry fashion, he has also warned the Bush administration against pursuing a "cut and run strategy." But there is no mistaking Kerry's deliberate effort play to those American voters, across the political spectrum, who want to know why the United States should spend a penny on reconstruction in Iraq or anywhere else abroad for that matter.

That was the audience Kerry played to on the most important foreign policy vote in 2003: the authorization of $87 billion for the reconstruction of Iraq. Rhetoric is one thing, and no candidate's rhetoric is entirely consistent throughout a campaign. But the vote on the $87 billion was real, and it was a test of a politician's willingness to set expediency aside. John Kerry—the man who now warns President Bush against cutting and running in Iraq—failed the test.

Kerry, of course, claims that he didn't like the particulars of Bush's proposal or the way Bush was conducting international diplomacy. In a statement explaining his vote, Kerry also complained that a proposal he co-sponsored with Senator Joseph Biden to repeal part of Bush's tax cut to pay for Iraq had been defeated. But guess what? Biden, who surely liked his own proposal as much as Kerry did, voted for the $87 billion anyway.

And so did 38 other Democratic senators, including Tom Daschle, Hillary Clinton, Christopher Dodd, and Barbara Mikulski. It's safe to say these Democrats did not vote for the $87 billion out of affection for George W. Bush or because they approved of Bush's conduct of foreign or domestic policy. We dare say some of them may have felt as strongly as Kerry about the inadequacies of administration policy. And some of those who voted for the $87 billion had even voted against the Iraq war in 2002—unlike, say, Kerry, who managed to vote for the invasion of Iraq one year and against the costs of staying the course the next.

Those Democrats who held their noses and voted for the $87 billion did so because they believed it vitally important to do something to aid the reconstruction of Iraq, and as quickly as possible. As Biden put it, "for all the errors of the past, we must confront the reality of the present and the imperative of the future." He continued:

> The reality of the present is that the window of opportunity is closing on our ability to bring peace to Iraq. . . . Losing the peace in Iraq is not about terror alone. It is so much bigger than that. . . . If we lose Iraq, Iran becomes an incredibly empowered nation; Syria becomes more emboldened; Turkey, an Islamic government, seeing a failed state on their border, becomes more radicalized; Iran, surrounded by the failed states of Iraq and Afghanistan, puts in jeopardy the very existence of Pakistan. . . . Losing the peace would reinforce the view held by the extremists in the Arab and Islamic world that while the United States can project power, we have no staying power, and that all they have to do is wait us out. . . . It would confirm the concerns of many moderate Arab regimes expressed before we went to war with Iraq that we would not finish the job. Our credibility in Iraq and the

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region and across the globe will be at rock bottom if we do not successfully secure the peace. America and Americans will be far less secure to boot.

Senator John McCain at the time accused Kerry, and John Edwards, of pandering to Howard Dean and the liberal base of the Democratic party. "They know better than that," McCain chided. Kerry may know better, but McCain was right about Kerry's political calculations. In an interview after the vote, Kerry attempted to explain his decision by pointing to a poll the previous week which showed that many voters in three early primary states said they preferred a nominee who voted for the war but who was critical of Bush's handling of Iraq after the war. Kerry was pleased to report he had received an ovation at a Democratic rally when he spoke of his vote against the $87 billion. "I think over time it's sinking in," Kerry told reporters. "I think I was prescient. I think I showed leadership."

We don't think so, and we wish the Democratic party had chosen someone with a better understanding of leadership. But now that Kerry is the nominee, we trust that serious Democrats will do their best to see to it that their candidate expresses a commitment like the president's to finishing the task in Iraq. Real and important progress has been made in this momentous, and at times trying, year. There should be no debating the need to persevere.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

From 9/11 to 3/11

For the first time since September 11, 2001, terrorists have struck the West in a spectacular way, murdering (at last count) 199 innocents and injuring a thousand others with a dozen bombs planted in Madrid's commuter-rail system at rush hour, three days before national elections. The first reaction of the civilized world should be to remember and mourn the dead, with mourning understood to include bringing to justice the barbarians who killed them.

But the second should be to correct the misimpression that has led many in the European press to refer to the event as "Spain's September 11." No European who mourned New York's dead after September 11—nor any grateful American—will need to be reminded that Spain deserves the special solicitude of its allies in the moment of its loss and disruption.

But the idea that the carnage of March 11 can by any stretch of the imagination be called a "Spanish problem" strikes us as false. It is the problem of all the civilized world's democratic republics and constitutional monarchies. Pat Cox, the president of the European parliament, is correct to call the Madrid attacks a "declaration of war on democracy." So is *Le Monde* to insist on its front page that "it is Europe and democracy that were attacked in Madrid."

At this writing, it is unclear whether the bombing was perpetrated by al Qaeda (as the simultaneity, the discovery of detonators and Arabic tapes at the trains' point of departure, and a questionable claim of credit posted to a London newspaper would indicate) or by the Basque terrorist group ETA (as earlier election-season threats at first led Spaniards to believe), or by some combination of the two. But the meaning of the attack does not depend on the identity—that is, the particular psychopathology—of the killers behind it. It is the civilized world that will provide the meanings here.

Having been attacked in al Qaeda communiqués as both a "crusader" country and an "apostate" former Islamic land, Spain will not delude itself that making nice—by, for instance, distancing itself from the U.S.-led war on terror—will ransom it from al Qaeda's wrath. Nor will the United States abandon Spain to its domestic terrorists on the equally false grounds that they are no concern of ours. If, for instance, terrorists with previously local grievances are learning logistical lessons from al Qaeda's large-scale simultaneous bombings, that is our problem, too.

The U.N. Security Council resolution condemning ETA in the aftermath of the bombings risks looking premature, should ETA turn out not to have been involved. But the United States was right to join the unanimous vote. It was a vote to recognize that the differences countries may have in measuring, investigating, and assessing terrorism are minor in relation to their need for common purpose in the face of the terrorist threat.

Outgoing Spanish prime minister José María Aznar made the decision to back the United States in its war on terror, not just in Afghanistan but also in Iraq. In the face of significant political resistance, he reached the assessment that seems to us the correct one: September 11 was Spain's September 11. In the same way, March 11 is our March 11. It confronts the United States with similarly solemn obligations of unlimited solidarity, not just in words but in deeds.

—Christopher Caldwell, for the Editors

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Ads Hominem

The 9/11-related attacks on Bush began long before his campaign ads. BY NOEMIE EMERY

LOOKING BACK, there is nothing surprising about the carefully plotted spasms of outrage at the reference, in a Bush campaign ad, to the terrorist attacks of September 11 through the fleeting shot of a flag-covered stretcher, and the smoldering ruins of the World Trade Center in downtown New York. This has been done, done before, and done for all the same reasons: Democrats have been steadily working to take September 11, its cause, effect, and aftermath, off the table of election-year politics since . . . oh, possibly . . .

September 12. Or, perhaps, to be fair, since some weeks later, when it became clear that George W. Bush's response to the attacks would be an electoral plus. Since then, a campaign has unfolded to move it off limits, using the charge of obscene exploitation, of unseemly use of the dead. In January 2002, when Karl Rove made the obvious point that the president's handling of terrorism would be a plus in the elections that fall—"We can go to the country on this issue, because they trust the Republican party to do a better job of protecting and strengthening America's military might"—Democrats denounced this as "shameful." They threw a fit in May 2002, when an innocuous photo showing Bush on Air Force One on September 11 was included in a set of three offered to Republican donors. The pattern of attacks accelerated on the news in January 2003 that the Republican convention would be held in New York, and hit new heights when the president made a surprise visit to Baghdad over the Thanksgiving holiday, where he committed the gross indiscretion of dishing out food to the troops. Last week, some even objected to the president's presence at a groundbreaking ceremony for the dead of September 11—to which Bush had been invited. Rather brazenly, and with some success, Bush's opponents have manufactured controversy over a presidential campaign discussion of the central concern of our era. Soon, we will no doubt hear denunciations of any mention of the president's constitutional duties as commander in chief.

From the start, a cadre of Democrats, backed by a chorus of friends in the media, kept up a steady drumbeat of carping intended to deny George W. Bush any credit for his leadership in the war on terror. Think back to that May 2002 flap over the RNC's offer to donors of three photographs from Bush's first year in office, including one of the president on September 11. It was taken on Air Force One, with the president looking out the window as he talked on the phone to the vice president. There was no rubble, no bullhorn, no victims, no sign of smoke, much less of fire, not a policeman or a fireman in sight. The emphasis was not on the attack, but on Bush doing his job.

"While most pictures are worth a thousand words, a photo that seeks to capitalize on one of the most tragic moments in our nation's history is worth only one—disgraceful," said Al Gore, Bush's embittered ex-rival, who had twice used the pain and suffering of his nearest relatives to plead his own case for high office. "Incredibly disrespectful to the families of the thousands of Americans who lost their lives just hours before this photo was taken," asserted Terry McAuliffe, without explaining just why. "With all the class of a 1:30 A.M. infomercial . . . the GOP pitched donors, for a bargain price, a pictorial triptych of W.'s 'defining moments,'" chirped Maureen Dowd the next day in the *New York Times*, as if on cue. "Bush's selling of that third photo, taken on September 11, sets a new, disgusting low in political fundraising," said liberal pundit Bill Press, suggesting an epic naiveté on his part.

Think back, if you will, to flap number two—the decision to hold the Republican National Convention in New York City. "You chose New York City . . . specifically to exploit 9/11," charged a liberal website, ignoring the fact that the city had courted both parties. Bush "cynically made 9/11 the cornerstone of the Republican 2002 election strategy," said Terry McAuliffe, as if the biggest event in several decades should not be discussed in campaigns. Other Democrats found fault with Bush's appearance on the deck of the *Lincoln*, when formal hostilities ceased in Iraq. "This is not some made-for-TV backdrop for a campaign commercial," intoned Robert Byrd on the floor of the Senate. "It is an affront to the Americans killed or wounded in Iraq for the president to exploit the trappings of war for the momentary spectacle of a speech"—as if a commander should not welcome and address the troops. Of course, Bush's Thanksgiving visit to the troops in Baghdad was yet another cynical use of war. How dare he appear in front of the troops, and worse yet, be cheered lustily? Bush "handed around a fake turkey," fowl maven John Kerry complained.

Let's see—an American president in a season of war should not make use of pictures in wartime, mention the war in a midterm election, visit an aircraft carrier, visit the troops in the field, mention the war while running for office, go to Ground Zero, go to New York at all, or draw attention in any way to his role as commander in chief. All of this is gross, crass, coarse, and highly insensitive.

Has any president in all of American history been quite so unfeeling and cynical? Well, yes. The only American president since Abraham Lincoln to run for reelection in wartime was Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, after another surprise attack on

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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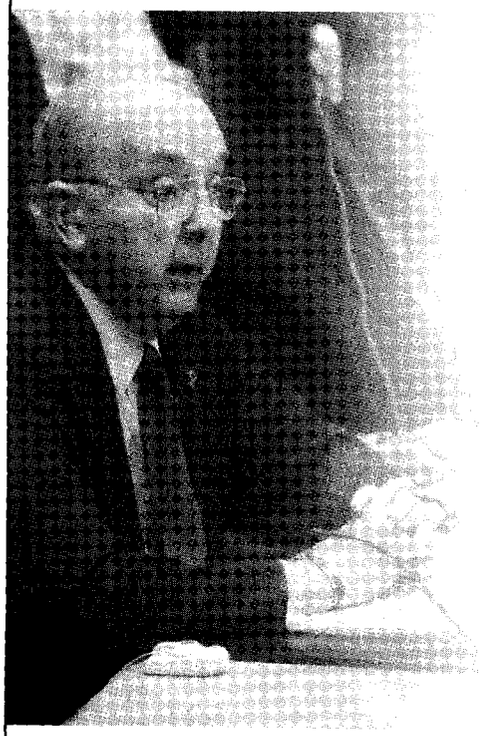

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American soil three years beforehand had set off another big war. On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes struck the U.S fleet at Pearl Harbor, killing around 3,000 Americans. Roosevelt did not hold his convention in Hawaii (which at that time was not yet a state of the Union, and was a bit difficult to travel to), but he did the next best thing. After the convention, he headed straight for Pearl Harbor, and it was there he kicked off his campaign, meeting conspicuously on the destroyer *Baltimore* with the two chief architects of the Pacific war. "A tremendous crowd was gathered at the pier when the President's cruiser pulled in," writes Doris Kearns Goodwin. "As far as the eye could see, men in whites were standing at attention at the rails of a dozen Navy ships. A rousing cheer went up as the gangplank was lowered to receive Admiral Nimitz and some fifty high ranking officials. . . . Stepping out from his limo, wearing his leather flying jacket, MacArthur acknowledged the tumultuous applause." After the meetings, FDR toured the island, inspecting training grounds, shipyards, and hospitals, paying special attention to the amputee veterans, with whom he identified because of his paralyzed legs. The visit made for great photos of the president, bringing back not only the memory of December 7, but emphasizing his own role as commander in chief.

So was FDR "exploiting" the attack and its victims? FDR-haters certainly thought so. But he was also reminding the country of the blow it had suffered, while directing attention to the war effort he commanded, which, though not without its mistakes and failures, had been a strategic success. He had every right to do so, as it was his achievement, and it also was the most important part of his job. Most of the people who complain the loudest about Bush also believe he benefited unfairly from the events of September 11, that he lucked into a wave of patriotic emotion he did not inspire, and did nothing at all to deserve. This is nonsense. Bush did not benefit from September 11, but from his response to it, which was not inevitable or foreordained.

"When the country really needed a president, he was there, his words and his actions serving as the rallying point for a shaken nation," noted David Broder in his March 11 *Washington Post* column. September 11, 2001, like December 7, 1941, was a national disaster that belongs to all people. But the responses to them belong to Bush and to Roosevelt, who developed them under pressure and duress, with great stores of vision and will. "Bush is a piker compared with FDR when it comes to wrapping himself in the mantle of commander in chief," Broder continued. "If you accept President Bush's premise that this nation is at war with terrorism, then you have to applaud the restraint that his campaign has shown so far."

Presidential politics is, at bottom, about making the most of your opportunities. And if those opportunities involve the anguish of others? Well, shows of restraint are rare. The Democrats should understand this well, as it was certainly the case with their last successful president. As explained by Joe Klein in his book, *The Natural*, here is how Bill Clinton came back from the political dead:

> On the morning of April 19, 1995, the day after the press conference in which Clinton had been forced to defend his own relevance, a powerful truck bomb destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 163 people. . . . Dazed and bleeding federal employees were seen suffering on the streets of Oklahoma City; their demolished children were carried out of the ruin of the building's day care enter. . . . Clinton delivered a moving eulogy at a prayer service commemorating the victims, four days after the bombing. And then, on May 5, he delivered a fighting commencement speech at Michigan State University: 'I say this to the militias and all others who believe that the greatest threat to freedom comes from the government instead of from those who would take away our freedom. . . . How dare you suggest that we in the freest nation on earth live in a tyranny? How dare you call yourselves patriots and heroes?' . . . Clinton later told me [Klein goes on] that the House Republicans were as much the target of this speech as were the right wing militias. The Gingrich Movement had been built on government bashing in the name of patriotism. The president now had not only a tactical strategy . . . but also an intellectual rationale for his campaign against the Republican revolution, and a passion for pursuing it.

Whoopee! The president of the United States deliberately linked the opposite party to the perpetrators of a vile attack on American citizens, and climbed back to power on the backs of its victims. Did the people of Oklahoma (a red state, after all) like the fact that their president made use of their grief to enhance his own interests? The Democrats probably didn't mind; the Republicans certainly did.

George W. Bush is under attack for reasons of naked partisanship. The fuss over his ads comes from people eager for him to lose, for reasons having nothing to do with the ads themselves. We've seen this sort of thing before. In May 2000 there was a media frenzy over the Million Mom March, organized by a "typical" housewife and mother who turned out to be a PR professional and liberal activist with ties to the Clintons. Something like this is true as well of the protesting family members of 9/11 victims, who turn out to be well connected to left-wing networks (see Matthew Continetti's report on page 24). "We are a long way from the land of political innocents," noted a March 10 editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*. "What we have, instead, are politically motivated activists standing willingly as a front organization for the Democratic party. They've traded on the press's reluctance to question their motives, hoping for a free run to impugn Mr. Bush every time he discusses terrorism from now until the election." Indeed, if there is exploitation going on, it is on the part of those who willfully exploit the immense sympathy the American people have for the terrorists' victims and their survivors for partisan purposes. ♦

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The Colossus of Sacramento

Schwarzenegger takes care of business.

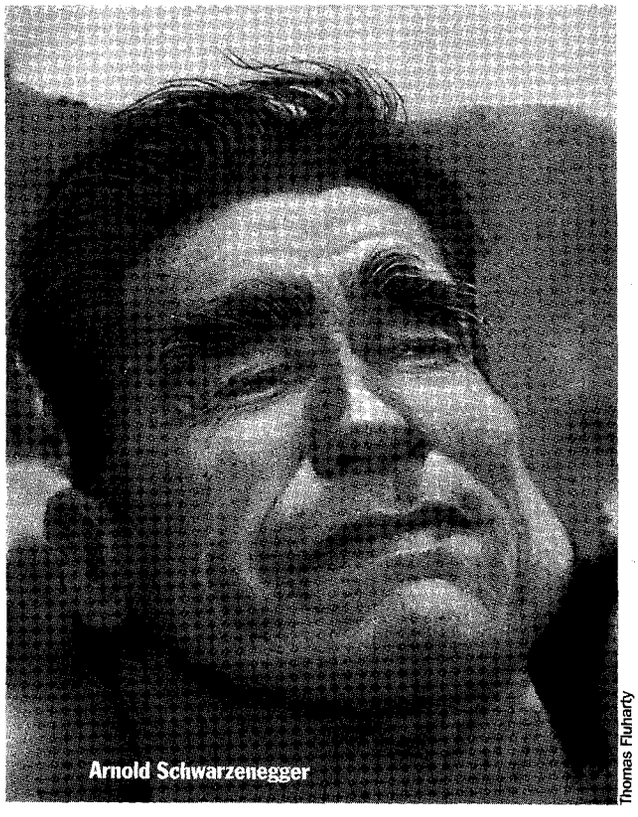
BY FRED BARNES

Sacramento

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR Arnold Schwarzenegger's political clout continues to grow. Having won landslide victories this month on two referendums, he is now whipsawing Democrats on his latest agenda item, reforming the state's out-of-control worker's compensation system. Allies of the Republican governor were on the steps of the California capitol last week, signing petitions to get a referendum to overhaul worker's comp on the ballot in November. Inside the capitol, Schwarzenegger was negotiating with Democrats to get a tough reform measure through the legislature.

With his dual strategy, the new governor has given Democrats an unenviable choice: Either retreat on worker's comp, now widely viewed as a job-killer in California, and agree to a compromise acceptable to the governor and most Republicans in the legislature, or face Schwarzenegger in a referendum this fall that could approve even more sweeping reform. Not surprisingly, Democrats are inclined to seek a compromise and avoid another referendum battle with the governor.

Just four months in office, Schwarzenegger is on offense. Republican legislators are in awe of him. When he drops by their meetings, they stand up as if royalty has entered the room. A Republican legislator running in the primary for a U.S. House seat aired a TV ad that showed a picture on his desk—not of his wife and kids, but of his friend Arnold.



Arnold Schwarzenegger

Thomas Fluharty

Democrats fear dealing with him, but they fear even more what might happen if they don't deal with him. California voters have responded enthusiastically to Schwarzenegger's call for bipartisan solutions to their state's fiscal and economic problems. Given Schwarzenegger's popularity, Democrats don't feel safe obstructing his agenda. But they know if they cooperate, the bipartisan agreements will be mostly on his terms. Democrats are on defense.

When Schwarzenegger came to office last November after winning an impressive victory in the special recall election, it was assumed that governing with an overwhelmingly Democratic legislature would be difficult. It's been easy. And now, after the success of Schwarzenegger's two propositions on the March 2 ballot, his position is stronger than ever. One proposition—to sell $15 billion in bonds to avert a tax hike—attracted less than 40 percent support in polls several weeks before the vote. But Schwarzenegger campaigned hard for it, with a whirlwind of personal appearances and TV ads. The proposition won with 63 percent. The second proposition (mandating a balanced budget) got 71 percent.

More victories seem likely. His negotiations with Indian casinos should produce more revenue soon. When Schwarzenegger picked Donna Arduin as his finance director, Republicans worried she might not be confirmed by the legislature. After all, she is known, from her work with other Republican governors, for being exceptionally skilled at slashing spending. In fact, the new budget Schwarzenegger unveiled in January proposed $11.5 billion in cuts and no tax increase. Nonetheless, Arduin's nomination was approved 5-0 by a Senate committee last week. And she was praised by the legislature's leading Democrat and foremost liberal, John Burton.

Democrats, Burton especially, would love to force Schwarzenegger to swallow a tax increase to get a budget passed. The governor has

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said, "A tax increase would be the final nail in California's financial coffin." If he yields, Republicans believe he would be seen by voters as no better than the pols here. "He'd become one of us," says Senate Republican leader Jim Brulte. He probably won't have to buckle. The new Democratic assembly leader, Fabian Núñez, is already talking about a budget with no new taxes. And since no Republican legislator would dare back a tax boost Schwarzenegger opposes, Democrats wouldn't get the two-thirds majority required to raise taxes anyway.

Before the budget is resolved, Schwarzenegger may reach a deal with Democrats on worker's comp. In recent years with Democrats in total control in Sacramento, premiums paid by businesses have tripled, further adding to the state's reputation as hostile to business. Schwarzenegger wants to slash premiums—California's are the highest in the nation—as part of his "Sell California" strategy to attract jobs and businesses to the state.

It's on worker's comp that Schwarzenegger's political prowess comes heavily into play. Democrats are bound to dislike any reform package the governor favors. But the alternative is a Republican-written proposition that would be all the more devastating to the current system. Absent agreement on worker's comp legislation, "there's a point in time when we decide we've got to go to the ballot," says Arduin. And Schwarzenegger has demonstrated he knows how to win a referendum.

Democrats will have enough trouble combating a separate proposition that's already made it onto the November ballot. It would repeal the law passed last year that requires businesses with 50 employees or more to provide health insurance to employees. So far, Schwarzenegger hasn't taken a position, and Democrats don't want to goad him into one. They're fearful that if he endorses the proposition, the health insurance mandate is doomed. They have every reason to feel that way. ♦

And Now for the Bad News . . .

Trouble ahead in the U.S.-China relationship.

BY ELLEN BORK

"WE HAVE good relations with China, the best relations we've had with China in 30 years," Secretary of State Colin Powell has been saying recently. Whether you agree with that assessment or not, the odds are several areas of conflict will soon make U.S.-China relations a lot rockier. Here are six issues that will cause Washington-Beijing ties to fray.

TAIWAN. Despite Bush administration hopes, the March 20 presidential election will not relieve tensions in the Taiwan strait or alleviate Beijing's pressure on Washington to lessen its support for Taiwan. The administration has very nearly chosen sides against the incumbent Chen Shui-bian as a result of Beijing's browbeating and its own secret fears that the one-China policy is hopelessly outdated.

But regardless of which candidate wins on March 20—Chen or the Nationalist Lien Chan—the Bush administration can expect tensions to persist. China will continue to build up its military capabilities. Meanwhile, Taiwan's population is developing a distinct Taiwanese identity. Economic ties to the mainland that many hope will dull independence leanings in many cases have the opposite effect. Even the Nationalist camp now rejects the "pro-unification" label. Beijing cannot reconcile itself to Taiwan's deepening democratic character.

HONG KONG. Beijing's flat rejection of democracy for Hong Kong and its heavy-handed threats against democrats as unpatriotic will force Washington to take a stand. For years, Washington has tacitly accepted Beijing's terms for governing Hong Kong, pretending they allow autonomy and democratic development. Beijing's system does no such thing, and Hong Kong's people are still voting and marching for real autonomy and democracy. Last summer, Beijing had to withdraw undemocratic national security provisions after well over 500,000 people marched against them.

Tensions are rising. Beijing fears next September's legislative elections will return a majority of pro-democracy members. Beijing distrusts Hong Kong's people, who supported Tiananmen Square protesters in 1989, and commemorate the victims of the massacre every June 4. In recent days, one Hong Kong group began a petition drive in support of Dr. Jiang Yanyong, the courageous SARS whistleblower who has written to top Chinese officials asking them to reverse the Communist party's position on Tiananmen Square. Others who have asked for such an acknowledgment by the party have gone to jail. No matter how much the United States would like to stay on the sidelines, the president's expressed support for democracy will lead to conflict with Beijing.

NORTH KOREA. In the coming months, it will be impossible for Washington to ignore the fact that Beijing is playing both sides of the street on the North Korean nuclear crisis. In fact, that recognition may be dawning. Just a week ago, when China tried to insert a key demand of Pyongyang's into a statement during

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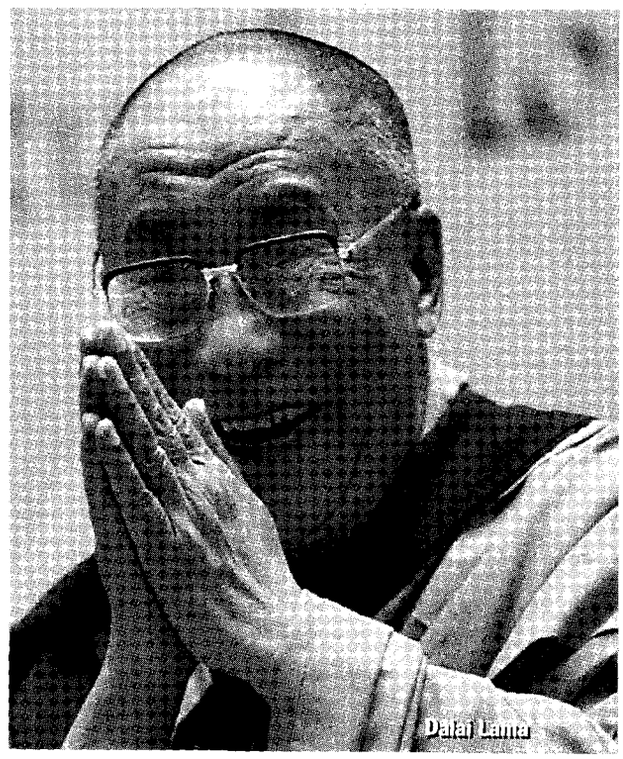
the latest six-party talks, President Bush intervened to say U.S. patience was wearing thin. The president, the *Washington Post* reported, "sent the curt directive after China sought to include in the statement a reference to North Korea's demand that the United States change its 'hostile policy.'" Moreover, according to the *Post*, the administration rejected another draft statement written by the Chinese "because it did not call for the 'complete, verifiable, irreversible dismantlement'" of North Korea's nuclear programs, a consistent requirement of the Bush administration's that China opposes.

At best, China has not used its considerable leverage as North Korea's main supplier of food and fuel, and continues to repatriate North Korean refugees to terrible fates. At worst, Beijing does Pyongyang's bidding. In short, Washington will have to recognize that Beijing is an obstacle to, not part of, a solution in North Korea.

Human rights. The Bush administration makes an exception for China when it comes to promoting democracy around the world. That much was clear from the president's speech at the National Endowment for Democracy last November. But the administration has nevertheless set itself up for a confrontation with Beijing over human rights. Starting in February 2003, the secretary of state and his spokesman began speaking of "setbacks," "deterioration," and "backsliding" in China's record, citing arrests of democracy activists, harsh sentences against Internet users and labor protesters, the execution of a Tibetan, forced repatriation from Nepal of Tibetan refugees, and actions against the media.

Last week, Secretary Powell hinted in testimony on Capitol Hill that the United States will renew efforts—suspended last year—to advance a resolution on China at the annual meeting of the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. Even that gentle threat had an effect. Shortly after Secretary Powell spoke, China sent Wang Youcai, a political prisoner, into exile here. A U.S.-led resolution would increase pressure on the E.U. not to lift its embargo on arms sales to China and signal a more serious U.S. policy on democracy and human rights.


Dalai Lama

Reuters / B. Mathur

Tibet. Tibet has been under the heel of China since the 1950s, with tragic consequences. Beijing's obliteration of Tibetan culture and the advancing age of the current Dalai Lama, who will be 69 in July, make winning autonomy and freedom for Tibetans urgent. China has plans to impose its own Dalai Lama when the current one dies. It has already subverted the Dalai Lama's selection of the Panchen Lama, the second most important figure in Tibet, who in 1995 was taken away by Chinese authorities and another boy given the position.

While the Bush administration has continued a trend of giving higher priority to Tibet, it confines itself to urging "dialogue," rather than seeking concrete political objectives such as stopping the massive population transfers of ethnic Chinese, economic marginalization of Tibetans, environmental degradation, and the militarization of the Tibetan plateau. These problems will only be intensified by Beijing's western development initiative, which includes a railroad connecting Lhasa with China's interior. President Bush, with his strong support for religious freedom, will be unable to look away from what may be the last chance to protect Tibetan religion and culture from annihilation by the Chinese.

Proliferation. Last but not least, the United States will have to face the contradiction between its opposition to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in general and its tolerance for China's proliferation to states like Pakistan. President Bush has made antiproliferation efforts a priority. In his speech at the National Defense University in February, he unveiled a proposal to close a loophole in the Non-Proliferation Treaty that allows nasty regimes to produce nuclear material for bombs under the cover of civilian nuclear programs. While China is getting more sophisticated at pretending to be on board with multilateral efforts on proliferation, it isn't. Beijing isn't even a member of the Proliferation Security Initiative, the centerpiece of the administration's North Korea policy. As evidence mounts of China's long history of providing nuclear technology and equipment throughout the world (as in Libya), and as Beijing pursues new activities (like its recent deal to build a second nuclear plant in Pakistan) against U.S. entreaties, strains between the two countries are bound to grow. ♦

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The Freshman They Love to Hate

She's running for the Senate—but not this year.

BY RACHEL DICARLO

WHEN I MEET Florida representative Katherine Harris in her Capitol Hill office, she pumps my hand and greets me in a gravelly voice. "I lost it somewhere in Iraq," she explains. "I think it was the sand." Harris is not as forbidding as she appears on television. She's small, athletic-looking, and—today at least—not made-up.

We sit down to chat, and Harris slides to the edge of her chair. She gestures with her hands to emphasize important points. If an aide interrupts, she taps her fingers on her armrest or cuts him off, then holds forth for minutes, reeling off numbers and other particulars relating to policies.

It's a good thing Harris brims with anxious energy. She has a lot to keep up with. The former Florida secretary of state, both famous and infamous for her role in the Florida recount in 2000, is adjusting to life on the Hill. "I have to constantly be running," she says. "It's a vertical learning curve. The issues are the same at the state level, but here the nuances are completely different."

During her first term, Harris has been tapped for the prestigious Whip Team and sits on the International Relations, Financial Services, and Government Reform committees. She's still asking for extra committees. "Katherine is tireless on the floor," House majority whip Roy Blunt said. "The thing that surprised people most was that she wasn't anything like the view projected by the national media."

Though Harris is only a freshman in Washington, she may be one of the most polarizing figures in the House. What other House member has been parodied by Ana Gasteyer on *Saturday Night Live* and made fun of on the *Late Show*? "Katherine Harris is in the middle of her 15 minutes of fame," David Letterman said on November 27. "Stage One: public ridicule. Stage two: the beauty makeover. Stage three: posing nude for *Playboy*. Stage four: becoming Mrs. Larry King."

Katherine Harris

Earl Keleny

Four years after she oversaw the ballot recount in Florida, she still regularly makes the news. A *New York Times* editorial on February 15 concluded that, "In 2000, the American public saw, in Katherine Harris's massive purge of eligible voters in Florida, how easy it is for registered voters to lose their rights by bureaucratic fiat." On *Meet the Press* on February 22, Ralph Nader told Tim Russert that the election "was stolen by Katherine Harris and Jeb Bush and their cohorts from Tallahassee to the Supreme Court."

Harris says the assaults on her character are "personally difficult," but she finds Nader amusing. "We're delighted he's in the election and wish him well." And of 2000 she says, "It's all rather humorous that Nader insists that it wasn't him who hurt Gore in Florida. They couldn't find one letter of the law I violated. If Al Gore had won his own state we wouldn't be in this situation."

Harris insists that her experience with Democrats on the Hill has been cordial. She practices Tae Kwon Do in the mornings with several male Democratic colleagues. "They realized I wasn't Cruella De Vil. Of course, then again, you won't find them defending me."

If Harris is polarizing, though, she's also upwardly mobile. Beltway insiders speculated that she'd run for the Senate in November, but in January at the Boys and Girls Club in Sarasota, she withdrew her name from a field of candidates to replace Bob Graham in 2004 despite "every poll showing me leading the race." She says she has unfinished business in the House and denies reports that Karl Rove told her to sit the race out. She's also dismissed the rumor that she was offered a consolation prize: to run against Democratic senator Bill Nelson in 2006. "The word is she got a deal," a source from a Florida newspaper said. "I don't know if it's true, but I wouldn't be surprised."

The White House hasn't said much

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about the race, but there are two reasons why they might want her to wait. One is Mel Martinez. The former secretary of Housing and Urban Development resigned in December and is emerging as one of the Republicans' best bets to expand their narrow majority in the Senate. Senate leadership supports him, and he should help draw Florida's expanding Hispanic population to the voting booths.

The second is Harris herself. Republicans have expressed concern that she might spur Democrats still angry about the 2000 election to vote against both her and President Bush. They hope Martinez will prevent that and help bring out Hispanics for Bush.

Harris won't say whether she plans on challenging Nelson in 2006, but she's fed the speculation. "I'm here to announce my candidacy for the U.S. Senate—but just not yet this year," she said at the Boys and Girls Club. She's also said she'll do everything she can to ensure a Republican senator in Florida. "She's looking to position herself for the Senate in 2006," a GOP strategist in Washington said. "She'll raise a ton of money and be a very attractive candidate in a Republican primary."

For now her seat in the House is safe. It's not overwhelmingly conservative—Bush won her district with 52 percent in 2000—but she's hugely popular with her constituents. "She gets a standing ovation wherever she goes," pollster Kellyanne Conway said. "She's got that seat as long as she wants it. She's burnished it with her brand."

Harris says she'll campaign for whoever wins the Florida Senate primary, as well as for House members who may be vulnerable in November. She also plans to help get out the Florida vote for the president, who trails John Kerry 49-43 percent in the state, according to the latest *Miami Herald/St. Petersburg Times* poll. "We can't take anything for granted in Florida," she says. "There's too much at stake. But the base is excited and invigorated. We don't want to have a quiet victory." ♦

Human Rights and Wrongs

Don't have high hopes for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. BY JOSEPH LOCONTE

THE UNITED NATIONS Commission on Human Rights begins its 60th session this week in Geneva. For the next six weeks the 53 member states will generate, if nothing else, a cacophony of moral indignation.

Delegates will hear about the use of torture in Iran, violence against women in Saudi Arabia, and the abduction of children by militias across Africa. Burma may finally come in for a scolding, after years of military atrocities. Israel, as usual, will face numerous resolutions condemning its treatment of Palestinians, though none is likely to criticize Yasser Arafat. The United States can expect bitter denunciations for its war on terrorism, while state sponsors of Islamic jihadists may escape blame. The Bush administration will be working, meanwhile, to advance a new coalition of democracies intended to outmaneuver the dictatorships.

The Commission's byzantine deliberations, then, will resemble those of the U.N. General Assembly—awash in both high-mindedness and hypocrisy. "What you'll see is how effective and skilled the dictatorships are in the diplomatic game," says Michael Goldfarb, press officer for Freedom House, the oldest human rights organization in the world. "They've turned the Commission into a rogues' gallery and effectively killed any substantive debate about human rights."

U.N. officials reject that view, but recent history tends to support it. State Department officials point to at least 18 repressive regimes now on the Commission, whose members serve three-year terms. China exerts strong influence, despite the Communist government's unrelenting crackdowns on political and religious groups. Nigeria, another member, is widely reported to support torture, extrajudicial killings, and radical Islam. Sudan is guilty of genocide and considered a state sponsor of terrorism. The Commission has no agreed definition of terrorism; it even endorsed suicide bombings against Israel as a legitimate form of armed conflict. In a 2001 vote that stunned the Bush administration, the Commission expelled the United States, a first in the body's history. Libya held the chair last year, elected by a vote of 33 to 3.

The upshot is that the Commission is almost unable to "name and shame" even the most despotic governments. Take North Korea. Evidence had mounted for years of its brutalities—state-backed torture, starvation, death camps—yet no resolution condemning it was passed until last year. "The Human Rights Commission has taken many years to get to the sad place that it is today," says Lorne Kraner, assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights, and labor. "If you don't want to be criticized by the Commission, the best thing to do is to get a seat on the Commission."

That's a far cry from the ideals laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the seminal docu-

Joseph Loconte is the William E. Simon fellow in religion and a free society at the Heritage Foundation and editor of the forthcoming The End of Illusions: America's Churches and Hitler's Gathering Storm, 1938-41.

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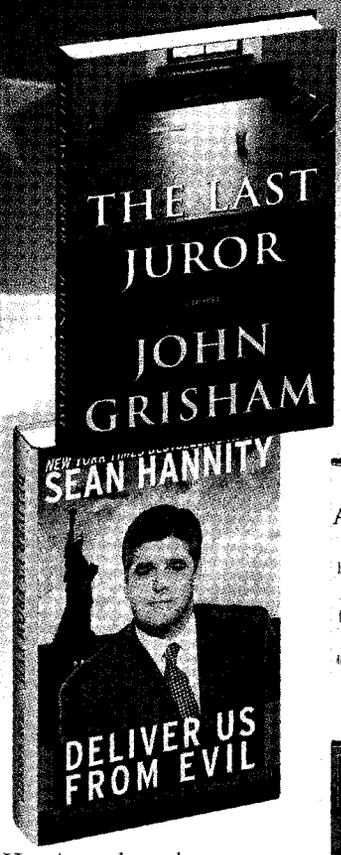

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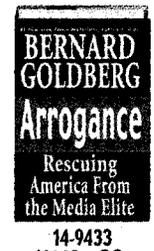

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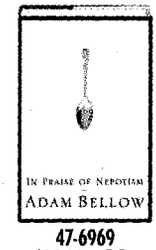

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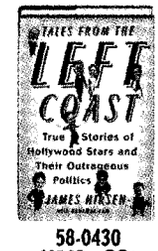

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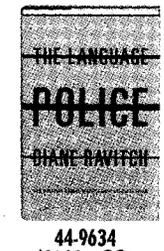

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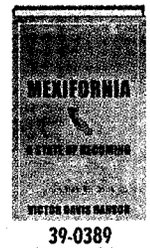

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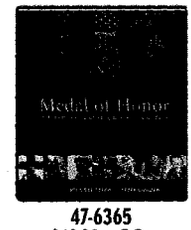

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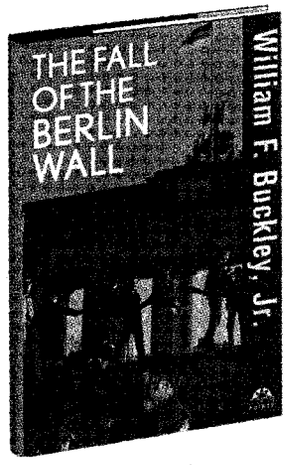

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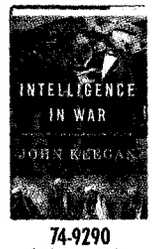

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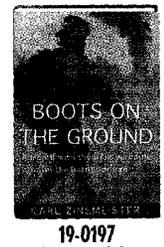

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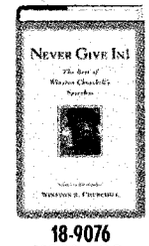

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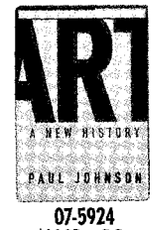

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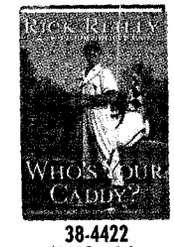

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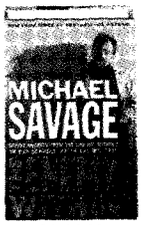

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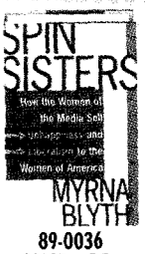

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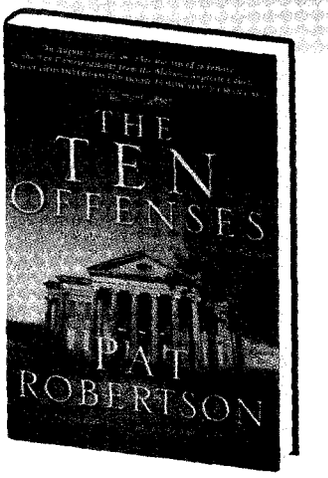

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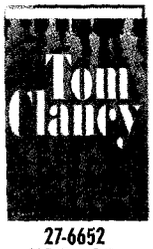

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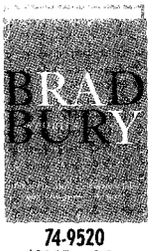

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Eleanor Roosevelt and Charles Malik at the U.N. General Assembly, meeting in Paris in 1948

ment of the original Commission on Human Rights created after World War II. With the atrocities of the Holocaust still fresh, the authors warned that "disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind." The Declaration's 30 articles enumerate political and social rights, including the right to life and liberty, equality under the law, and freedom of speech and assembly. There are also prohibitions against slavery, torture, and arbitrary arrest.

The crown jewel is Article 18: the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. The provision, drafted by Lebanese ambassador Charles Malik, includes the right to change one's religion. When first proposed, it enraged the Communist and Muslim delegates (six of the original European members belonged to the Soviet bloc, while nine members claimed Islam as their dominant religion). Nevertheless, Malik—an Arab Christian and a powerful intellectual force on the Commission—stood his ground. "All those who stress the elemental economic rights and needs of man are for the most part impressed by his sheer animal existence. This is materialism, whatever else it may be called," Malik argued. "But unless man's proper nature, unless his mind and spirit are brought out, set apart, protected, and promoted, the struggle for human rights is a sham and a mockery."

The U.N. General Assembly adopted the Declaration in 1948 without a single dissenting vote (though with a number of states abstaining). Its language affirming the "equal and inalienable rights" of all people influenced scores of postwar and postcolonial constitutions and treaties. Drew University's Johannes Morsink calls it the "secular bible" for literally hundreds of advocacy groups and thousands of foot soldiers in the field.

Inevitably, though, the Declaration is widely referenced but little understood. Its social and economic guarantees—which include even a "right to rest and leisure"—are regularly invoked to deflect attention from violations of more fundamental rights.

That may be changing. The Bush administration regards the promotion of democratic freedoms as essential to the war on terrorism. "As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish," Bush said last fall, "it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export." In a policy speech earlier this month, Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States would "always keep in the forefront of our efforts the necessity to deal with human rights in every country that we have relations with."

What might this mean in Geneva? The United States, back on the Commission, is expected to push for statements or resolutions on Belarus, Burma, Cuba, Iran, Nepal, Nigeria, North Korea, and Zimbabwe. Richard Williamson, chairman of the U.S. delegation, wants a resolution against China, but acknowledges it will be difficult to pass. This despite Beijing's record of arbitrary arrests, prison camps, and "egregious violations" against religious communities, according to Human Rights Watch and other groups. As David Aikman, author of *Jesus in Beijing*, told Congress last year, "China's political leadership appears to have decided that any religion in China, if not strictly supervised, could turn into the regime's Achilles' heel."

The administration also will have to play defense. A Brazilian resolution defeated last year is expected to be recycled, calling for a ban on all forms of discrimination by sexual orientation. Conservative groups see this as a ploy to marginalize religious organizations that uphold traditional marriage—an effort already gaining ground in Europe. (Last year Sweden criminalized speech that might be "offensive or threatening" to homosexuals, and charges already have

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been brought against a Pentecostal pastor.) Moreover, the resolution does not define sexual orientation or limit sexual "rights" by age, which could make it more difficult to prevent the abuse and trafficking of children.

Commission watchers say that until its membership improves, its work will be seriously compromised. The problem is not only rogue governments, but regional coalitions that help elect states to terms on the Commission and then work to thwart resolutions against them. Even the democracies in Africa, for example, tend to overlook brutalities committed by their neighbors. Mark Lagon, deputy assistant secretary of state at the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, suggests that nations under U.N. sanctions not be allowed on the Commission. Meanwhile, foreign ministers from 10 democracies—including Chile, Poland, South Korea, and the United States—are promoting a Community of Democracies to function as a caucus within the United Nations. Members must actually adhere to the principles of the U.N. Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. During the session in Geneva, they plan to build support for a resolution promoting democratic institutions.

U.N. officials deny the suggestion that the human rights commission has betrayed its founding vision, or that higher standards for participation are needed. "You don't advance human rights by preaching only to the converted," argues Shashi Tharoor, U.N. undersecretary-general for communications and public information. "The ship of universal human rights cannot set sail by leaving human beings from some countries on the shore."

Others disagree. Habib Malik, son of Charles Malik and a professor at the Lebanese American University in Beirut, explains that those suffering under repressive regimes won't be rescued by the anemic values of multiculturalism. "The argument that 'inclusiveness' is the only way these states may start to change—I think it's baloney," he says. "You have to emphasize the practical and empirical power of a set of moral directives . . . to uphold individual rights."

It may be that the Universal Declaration has been more useful to that end than the Commission—just as Charles Malik seems to have anticipated. Even as the Commission was working to win approval of the Universal Declaration (no small feat at the onset of the Cold War), he wondered whether democratic nations would have the resolve to implement its principles. "I have observed a certain degree of inordinate caution, nay perhaps even of cynicism, with regard to carrying out the mandate," Malik said. "It is as though the real will to achieve and ensure human rights were lacking." The passage of time has borne out his lament. ♦

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How to Stage a Controversy

Peace activists, left-wing flacks, and compliant reporters produced the flap over Bush's 9/11 ads

By Matthew Continetti

It was the week of March 4, and the Bush reelection campaign was ready to go on the offensive. One campaign official told the *New York Times* that the president was "eager" to start the debate with Massachusetts senator John Kerry, the Democratic nominee. Another, Matthew Dowd, the president's pollster, said, "We have a whole series of things we're going to correct that have been said over the last six months." And the day before the ads premiered, Ken Mehlman, Bush's campaign manager, put it this way to CNN: "There's now about to be a two-way conversation. We're now going to talk about the clear choice that Americans will face on November 2, 2004."

Mehlman spoke too soon. What people ended up talking about after the Bush ads were unveiled was whether the president's campaign had "exploited" the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks by using a couple of seconds of footage from that day in two of its three advertisements. That's because the news coverage of the official launch of George W. Bush's reelection campaign focused on the reactions to the ads of firefighters and 9/11 victims' families. These people, presented as a random assortment of individuals, were angry at the president for using the attacks supposedly as a political prop.

Democrats seized on the controversy. "This is just the latest example of the way this president has been a divider and not a uniter," Tad Devine, a Democratic campaign strategist, said on ABC. Devine's boss, John Kerry, told the *New York Times*, "There are plenty of ways to convey the threat of terror without usurping what I think is a very sensitive memory in the American consciousness." Paul Begala, the CNN pundit and former Clinton adviser, put it bluntly: "The president's use of footage from September 11 in a partisan political commercial has provoked outrage from victims' families and from firefighters who say their brothers and sisters did not sacrifice and suffer for a cheap, cheesy, campaign ad."

This criticism caught the Bush campaign by surprise. On Friday, March 5, Karen Hughes, the Bush strategist, told the *Early Show*'s Harry Smith, "with all due respect, . . . I just completely disagree" with those who thought the television ads were exploitative. Hughes's reason, expressed haltingly, was that "September 11 was not just a distant tragedy. It's a defining event for the future of our country." There were other reasons to be skeptical of the criticism as well, which Hughes neglected to mention. The images of Ground Zero amounted to only a few seconds in each ad. And soot-covered New York City firefighters roaming through the rubble of the World Trade Center were nothing new to American television.

Neither is it anything new, of course, when a small group of people with excellent public relations skills and a political axe to grind are able to manipulate an unskeptical media. Which seems to be what happened in the case of the Bush television ads. For much of the controversy can be traced directly to a press release issued by the Institute for Public Accuracy, or IPA, at a little after 2:00 P.M. on March 4.

The IPA is a five-person media clearinghouse located in the National Press Building. According to GuideStar, a website that tracks nonprofits, the group "promotes the inclusion of outlooks that usually get short shrift." It does this by issuing press releases. It has been issuing press releases since April 8, 1998. These go out to about 7,000 journalists and television producers. They promote speakers and experts whose outlooks are generally of a far-left bent. When I asked Sam Husseini, the IPA's communications director, whether the outfit was left-liberal, he told me, "I'm so far beyond labels, just give me the facts." But the IPA's facts are often questionable (mass starvation in Afghanistan, a massacre at the Jenin refugee camp in April

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2002, and so on), and their opinions are always hard-left. After the Clinton administration began its bombing of Kosovo in March 1999, the IPA promoted the antiwar punditry of Howard Zinn, the radical historian, who claimed Clinton had "deceived" the United States into war against Slobodan Milosevic. And when the Bush administration invaded Afghanistan in October 2001, the IPA turned reporters onto similar radical ideologues who opposed the war. Ditto with the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

The IPA release on March 4 was brief—under 500 words—and little more than a list. It highlighted three potential stories and sources for journalists. One was the upcoming trip to Afghanistan of a mother whose firefighter son was killed in the September 11 attacks. Another was an Afghan women's rights activist's comments on International Women's Day, which took place on March 8.

But the lead item was the Bush ads story, featured in the subject line of the email: "Firefighters and 9/11 Families on Bush Ads." Journalists were pointed in two directions. First, they were alerted that Harold Schaitberger, the general president of the International Association of Fire Fighters, was outraged at the Bush ads. As is typically the case with such press releases, a helpful quote from Schaitberger was included. "I'm disappointed but not surprised that the President would try to trade on the heroism of those firefighters in the September 11 attacks. The uses of 9/11 images are hypocrisy at its worst." Two email addresses were listed, as well as two contact numbers for Schaitberger, both in Washington, D.C., where the IAFF has its headquarters.

Second, the IPA press release directed reporters interested in the Bush campaign ads to Adele Welty, David Potorti, and Colleen Kelly, members of a group called September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. All three had lost relatives in the September 11 attacks. All were promoting Adele's upcoming peace mission to Afghanistan. And all were also "available to comment on the Bush advertising campaign," with their phone numbers provided.

And comment they did. Sifting through the news coverage of the controversy over Bush's ads, one finds the same individuals—Schaitberger, Potorti, and Kelly—quoted again and again. Schaitberger and Kelly are both quoted in a *Boston Globe* story that ran on March 5. Schaitberger and Kelly Campbell, a spokeswoman for September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, were the sources for the *Washington Post*'s account. Kelly, Potorti, and Jeff Zack, a spokesman for the International Association of Fire Fighters, are quoted in the AP dispatch on the Bush ads. Potorti is quoted in *USA Today*'s story.

In fact, members of Peaceful Tomorrows are often quoted without any mention of their group affiliation. In what looks like an egregious case of lazy reporting, multiple news outlets treated members of Peaceful Tomorrows as if they were nonaffiliated people-on-the-street in order to make the controversy over the Bush ads seem widespread.

For example, in the March 5 *Boston Globe* story, Colleen Kelly is identified as the "New York area coordinator for Peaceful Tomorrows, an advocacy group formed by relatives of those killed on Sept. 11." But David Potorti, who is the group's codirector, is identified only as someone "whose brother was killed in the attacks on New York."

The same thing happens in the Associated Press's account, in which Potorti is identified as a political "independent from Cary, N.C." In fact, of all the major news outlets that quoted Potorti as a 9/11 family member upset at the Bush ad campaign, only *USA Today* identified him as a member of Peaceful Tomorrows.

The same rule applied to other members of Peaceful Tomorrows. Here is an excerpt from Paul Farhi's *Washington Post* story on March 5, which ran under the headline "Bush Ads Using 9/11 Images Stir Anger":

> "The idea that President Bush would rally support around his campaign by using our loved ones in a way that is so shameful is hard for me to believe," said Rita Lasar, a New York resident whose brother, Abe Zelmanowitz, died in the North Tower of the World Trade Center. "It's so hard for us to believe it's not obvious to everyone that Ground Zero shouldn't be used as a backdrop for a political campaign. We are incensed and hurt by what he is doing."
>
> Kelly Campbell, co-director of a nonpartisan group called Sept. 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, acknowledged that some victims' relatives found the ads appropriate. "There's no consensus around this, but for the most part 9/11 families are very sensitive to someone using images of our loved one's death for their own ends," she said.

Notice that, while Campbell is identified as the codirector of Peaceful Tomorrows, Rita Lasar is quoted as if she'd been selected at random from a list of people who had lost relatives in the terror attacks. But two days later, in a *CNN.com* report on a press conference in New York City held by Peaceful Tomorrows and organized by the anti-Bush group *MoveOn.org*, Rita Lasar shows up again . . . this time, as one of the group's spokeswomen. "It's a deep hurt and sorrow that any politician, Democrat or Republican, would seek to gain advantage by using that site," she told CNN.

It is worth noting that Harold Schaitberger and other members of the International Association of Fire Fighters never said their criticism transcended partisan politics. This makes sense. Last fall, the union was one of the first to endorse John Kerry's presidential bid. But most news outlets that talked to Schaitberger mentioned the fact that he is a partisan Democrat only several paragraphs below the catchy headline (usually a variation on "*Firefighters*

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Angry at New Bush Ads") if at all. And no story mentioned that Schaitberger is one of eight national cochairs of John Kerry's campaign.

By contrast, the members of Peaceful Tomorrows did say that their outrage was bipartisan. "It's an insult to use the place where my brother died in an ad," David Potorti told the AP. "I would be just as outraged if any politician did this." Would he? Certainly NPR, which reported that Peaceful Tomorrows was an "officially nonpartisan" organization, thought so. As did the *Washington Post*, which also called Peaceful Tomorrows "nonpartisan." This was an exceedingly unhelpful and incomplete description. It's true that the group does not officially support Democrats or Republicans. But obviously relevant to its political identity is that it opposed any military response to the September 11 attacks, whether in Afghanistan, Iraq, or elsewhere. And one question about the 9/11 survivor-critics of the Bush ads that reporters failed to investigate was: Who *are* these people?

On September 11, 2001, the day Jim Potorti died inside the World Trade Center, his brother David was living in Cary, North Carolina. David had moved there from California in order to pursue a master's degree in folklore. He was devastated by his brother's death. But what also disturbed him was the way in which the United States responded to the terrorist attacks. "While the humanity of the 9/11 victims—their names, faces, and stories—became better known," he wrote last year in an op-ed for New York *Newsday*, "our society seemed to care less and less about the traditions, histories, and humanity of other innocent victims." America was seized by "anger and intolerance"—the "very things that had led to my brother's murder."

He felt he had nothing left to lose. As the months passed, he read about various family members of 9/11 victims who were against war with the Taliban. He sought them out via email, and, in November 2001, invited some to join him on a peace march from the Pentagon to New York City. The march lasted several days. It was called the "Walk for Healing and Peace." It was sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, part of the Coalition for Peace and Justice, a collection of post-9/11 peace groups. The Fellowship of Reconciliation was controversial. It came under fire in the fall of 2001 for refusing to fly an American flag outside its offices in Upper Nyack, New York. The group chose to fly an "earth flag" instead.

Potorti was no stranger to activism. In 1997, living in Santa Monica, California, he joined The Oaks Project, a progressive organization devoted to organizing "people who feel disenfranchised by the two-party, big-money system." The Oaks Project was a creation of Ralph Nader, the consumer activist and presidential candidate. Potorti spent time gathering signatures for legislation nullifying parts of a utility deregulation bill. In his pre-9/11 days, Potorti was a frequent writer of letters to the editor. In one, he inveighed against "righteous conservatives." In another, he accused Republicans of ignoring the homeless and the unemployed.

As Potorti marched north as part of the "Walk for Healing and Peace," he got to know Amber Amundson, whose husband Craig had died on September 11, and Craig's brothers, Ryan and Barry. He also met Kelly Campbell, Craig Amundson's sister-in-law, who worked at a nonprofit in San Francisco. They all had backgrounds in progressive activism. And their status as relatives of those killed on 9/11 gave them special cachet among peace activists. When the "Walk for Healing and Peace" crossed into Manhattan, for instance, Potorti and the Amundsons led the march.

Within a few months, antiwar activism became Potorti's full-time job. In early 2002, with monetary support from the Fellowship for Reconciliation, he put his master's degree on hold to found September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. The group took its name from an utterance of Martin Luther King Jr.'s. It comprised only 13 people, among them the Amundsons and Kelly Campbell, who quit her job to work full-time with Potorti.

Funding was not a problem. Potorti says that the group's funding is "confidential." But a quick visit to several nonprofit websites shows that Peaceful Tomorrows receives money and support from a bevy of left-wing foundations. Among them is the Tides Center, which is a project of the Tides Foundation, which is a recipient of generous grants from the Heinz family endowments, one of which, at least, is chaired by Teresa Heinz, the wife of Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry. (Spokesmen for the Heinz endowments are quick to say that the money they provide to the Tides Foundation and Center is directed solely towards environmental projects in western Pennsylvania.) Peaceful Tomorrows is only one of many Tides Center projects. Others include the Ruckus Society, a radical antiglobalization group, and the Iraq Peace Fund, which provides support to such anti-Bush groups as *MoveOn.org* and Democracy Now.

Peaceful Tomorrows' activism took many forms. They sent representatives to Afghanistan to visit with survivors of U.S. bombing raids. They lobbied Congress for an Afghan Victims compensation fund. In the fall of 2002, they organized a "No More Victims Tour," in which members of the group traveled the country to protest U.S. military action abroad, accompanied by "Victims of terrorism and war—from Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, and the Palestin-

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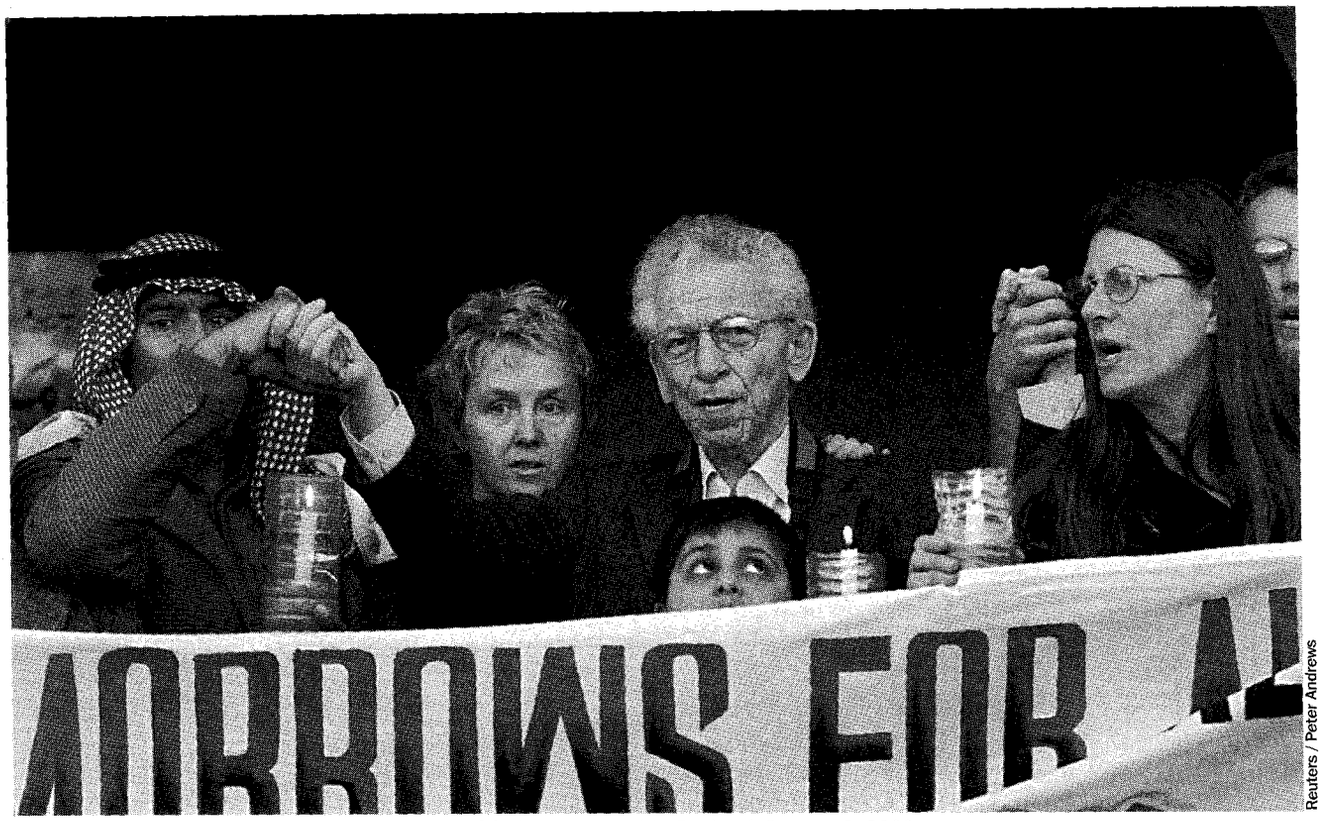

Reuters / Peter Andrews

A Peaceful Tomorrows vigil in Baghdad, January 8, 2003

ian territories, the Philippines and Japan." One stop on the "No More Victims Tour" was the European Social Forum, an annual meeting of antiglobalization groups held in 2002 in Florence, Italy. "The day that America began to bomb Afghanistan," Kelly told the Forum, as Christopher Caldwell reported in the November 25, 2002, issue of THE WEEKLY STANDARD, "I cried. Because I thought about how many hundreds of young men like my brother would be there. At that moment, I denounced my government, which does not represent me."

The members of the group also wrote letters to the editor. The *New York Times* published one from David Potorti on April 28, 2003:

> Since the worst terrorist attack in American history, which took the life of my brother, occurred in New York on Sept. 11, it seems appropriate that President Bush will be making his re-election bid from that city at that time in 2004.
>
> Perhaps the millions of unemployed Americans, veterans whose benefits have been threatened, families of dead civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq, working people who lost their pensions to corporate fraud, and 41 million Americans without health insurance can come to town and join him in celebrating the other achievements of his first term.

Nonpartisan?

Indeed, Peaceful Tomorrows never pretended to shrink from involvement in politics. On September 25, 2002, group members held a joint press conference with congressman—and future Democratic presidential candidate—Dennis Kucinich. The conference was called to protest a potential invasion of Iraq. "I believe the best way to honor the dead is by seeking justice through nonviolent means, not by starting new wars," said Andrew Rice, a member of Peaceful Tomorrows whose brother died at the World Trade Center. A few months later, they once again attended a Capitol Hill press conference, this time along with Sheila Jackson Lee, the Democratic congresswoman from Texas.

At times the group displayed a striking naiveté. In January 2003, members visited Iraq. On a tour of Baghdad sponsored by Saddam Hussein's government, the group from Peaceful Tomorrows was taken to a shelter where Baathists claimed 200 civilians were killed during the 1991 Gulf War. Tariq Aziz, the deputy prime minister of Baathist Iraq, said that the trip was "a very important international development" helpful to Saddam's interests. The same people who now agitate against politicians' using September 11 for political gain played into the hands of a dictator using war ruins for political gain. When the group returned to the United States, they took part in a media blitz publicized by—guess who—the Institute for Public Accuracy. "There are cycles of violence that need to be broken," one member told Connie Chung. Colleen Kelly told the Voice of America, "The twisted steel and concrete visible there inside the shelter was very reminiscent of the

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wreckage of the World Trade Center. So there was a deep connection."

Peaceful Tomorrows, not to put too fine a point on it, is a group of left-wing antiwar activists. No one should have been the least bit surprised at their reaction to the Bush-Cheney ads.

What was surprising, however, was the Bush campaign's haphazard response to this orchestrated media firestorm. It's true that Karen Hughes and Scott McClellan, the White House press secretary, defended the ads. And both former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani and Bernard Kerik, New York City's former police chief, went on the air to defend Bush. But the message coming from the campaign was mired in confusion, aides say. They were no longer playing offense. They were playing defense. And they had little idea how to make the case to the public that Bush had not "exploited" the terrorist attacks.

Consider the experience of Jimmy Boyle. A former president of the Uniformed Firefighters Association, a New York affiliate of Schaitberger's IAFF, Boyle lost his son at the World Trade Center on September 11. He is a New Yorker and lifelong Democrat who plans to vote for Bush in November. When he heard that 9/11 families were criticizing the president's campaign ads, he wanted to speak out in Bush's defense. He quickly wrote an "Open Letter to America," which he and 22 other family members of victims signed. He sent it to various New York media outlets on Saturday, March 6.

The letter was plainly heartfelt. "In the November election," it began, "we will have a clear choice laid before the American people. President Bush is rightly offering us that choice and the images of Sept. 11, although painful, are fundamental to that choice. The images in President Bush's campaign television ads are respectful of the memories of Sept. 11."

Boyle wanted to help defend the president. He contacted his congressman, Republican Peter King, in order to publicize the letter. King tried to put Boyle in touch with the Bushies. "I was struck at how difficult it was to make the connection. Jimmy did all the work," says someone close to Boyle. "When it comes to a controversy like this, you really need some fast turnaround." But no one from the Bush camp contacted Boyle.

Until, that is, Wednesday, March 10, late in the afternoon, when the campaign called to say it had found a way for Boyle to help. The next day, Bush traveled to Nassau County, on Long Island, to attend the unveiling of a 9/11 memorial. At the Thursday gathering, Bush shook hands with a crowd of people who had lost relatives in the terrorist attacks. One of the first he was introduced to was Jimmy Boyle.

It's a safe bet that there are thousands like Boyle, relatives of people murdered on 9/11 who supported the president during the wars against the Taliban and Saddam Hussein. And it's a safe bet, further, that any one of those people, or any of the numerous 9/11 families groups, would have happily gone on record as having no objection to the Bush campaign's reelection ads. Indeed, reading the news coverage of the ads controversy, one finds, scattered among the quotes from Harold Schaitberger and the members of Peaceful Tomorrows, individuals who support Bush's campaign ads.

People like Debra Burlingame, whose brother had piloted the plane the terrorists crashed into the Pentagon. "I suspect that the real outrage over the ads has more to do with context than content," she wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* last week. "It's not the pictures that disturb [groups like Peaceful Tomorrows] so much as the person who is using them." Or Patricia Riley, whose sister died at the World Trade Center, and who told the Associated Press, "The president has every right to point to his leadership during that time." Or Ernest Strada, who told the *Washington Post*'s Dana Milbank, at the Nassau County unveiling on March 11, "It's important that everybody in the country, led by the president, continue to remember what happened two and a half years ago." Milbank, in fact, found near unanimity among the people he interviewed at the unveiling. "Virtually all," he wrote, "said [Bush] was welcome here and welcome to use the attacks in his campaign."

So what went wrong here? Why the fuss over Bush's ads? How is it that so many journalists were willing to be led by the nose to write blatantly misleading stories, when the truth was so easy to ascertain? The simple answer is, well, they were being lazy and partisan. Plus, the straight story—"Peace Activists, Kerry Co-chair Criticize Bush Ads"—is a yawner.

On March 12, in an interview on National Public Radio, John Kerry's campaign manager, Mary Beth Cahill, told Juan Williams about the challenges facing Democrats in the upcoming election. Cahill explained that Democrats are up against a disreputable Republican political machine that launches "scurrilous" attacks on its political foes. They are up against an "echo chamber," which their opponents create by planting rumors on the Internet, getting them picked up by talk radio, and thus launching them into the political discussion at large.

Funny. Cahill might as well have been talking about the Institute for Public Accuracy and the phony "controversy" it managed to generate over the Bush campaign's first round of television ads. ♦

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The Sleeping Giant Wakes

The consequences of China's growth

By Irwin M. Stelzer

That China's National People's Congress convened last week is *not* news, though it provided the occasion for prime minister Wen Jiabao's first address to the rubber-stamping body, a 90-minute affair which, quite predictably, was well received. That China released two dissidents, Wang Youcai and Phuntsog Nyidron, *may* be news, if it portends a greater sensitivity to pressure from international human rights advocates and even a slight loosening of the regime's grip on the political system. That Wen announced China will address the economic imbalances that threaten to turn its phenomenal growth into an equally phenomenal bust *is* news. China has accounted for a larger share of world growth in the past seven years than has the United States, making the health of its economy important to far more than its own 1.3 billion people.

China's trade policy, and especially its burgeoning trade surplus with the United States, is now front and center in the debate over the propriety of George W. Bush's (somewhat) free trade policies. A combination of resurgent Democratic protectionism and a sluggish jobs market has Americans worried, and White House campaign-planners are trying to figure out how to counter that new recruit to the protectionist cause, John F. Kerry, without completely abandoning the president's commitment to free trade.

Voters' fears are understandable: As many see it, China is taking jobs away from textile workers, furniture makers, and appliance assemblers, to mention just a few industries decimated by imports. Free trade makes the U.S. economy stronger and more efficient in the long run, as the much-maligned chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers pointed out, to the consternation of Democrats and Republicans alike in Congress. But in a political season, the long run is a few months, and economists' assurances that it all will end up with rising living standards, lower prices, and job creation count for little. Nor do the worries of the White House seem to count for much in China, which seems unprepared to offer more than a token response to American fears—understandable, in the context of the economic problems of a nation that is in the grip of perhaps the most profound and rapid economic change ever experienced by a major country.

Consider this: Some 300 million of China's 1.3 billion people have moved from country to city since the economy was liberalized in the later 1970s. That about equals the total population of the 15 member states of the European Union, and is considerably more than the current population of the United States. By 2020, 250 million more Chinese are expected to leave their villages, putting an additional burden on urban infrastructures ill-equipped to handle that load. Little wonder that the minister in charge of the Chinese government's think tank calls the emergence of China as an industrialized country "the most profound social transformation in world history." And little wonder that the Chinese authorities are having difficulty coming to grips with the necessity of phasing out inefficient state-run enterprises that at least have the virtue of providing jobs to the millions moving off the land.

Little wonder, too, that the economic consequences of China's growth are creating more than a few worries for the world's policymakers. It is well known that China's thirst for oil—imports last year were up over 30 percent—makes it the world's second largest importer (the United States remains a clear first, relying on imports for over half of the 20 million barrels per day it consumes, compared with China's six million barrels). So China is now a player in the intense game of oil geopolitics. It is investing in the search for oil in Azerbaijan and forging closer

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commercial ties with a Russia that hopes to capture a good portion of the Chinese market. And it is attending to its relations with Middle Eastern producers on whom it will increasingly depend for supplies, and for whom it is the world's fastest growing market, projected to import 10 million barrels per day by 2030, about as much as America now buys.

The implications are obvious: The Chinese may decide that their need for oil requires them to come down on the side of Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern producers when those countries unite to block U.S. peace initiatives and antiterrorist measures. And China's arms sales to Iran and Saudi Arabia will likely grow in pace with its need for Middle Eastern oil. In the case of Iran, those sales already include cruise missiles and what Gal Luft and Anne Korin of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security call "key ingredients for the development of nuclear weapons."

Indeed, China's economic growth is putting pressure not only on oil prices, which are up almost 50 percent from pre-Iraq war levels, but on many of the world's commodity markets. Its need for metals (China is now the world's largest importer of copper, tin, and zinc, among other materials), coal, rubber, cement (China is the world's largest consumer), fabrics, and foods has tightened those markets. And its demand for the ships to move those goods is pushing the capacity of the world's bulk carriers to its limits, driving up shipping rates by some 550 percent since 2001, according to economists at Barclays Capital. All of which, Goldman Sachs economists figure, has pushed up commodity prices by 14 percent since the middle of last year.

The recent spurt in oil and gasoline prices has only now made Americans notice the impact China is having on commodity markets. But the effect of Chinese growth on our trade deficit and, it is alleged, jobs, has been in the headlines since the start of the Democratic primary campaign. China is currently running an annual trade surplus with the United States in excess of $125 billion (China has replaced Japan as the leading contributor to America's trade deficit), and whatever virtues supporters of free trade can cite for open markets, and however much they point out the irrelevance of bilateral trade balances, a figure as eye-catching as $125 billion is forcing the Bush administration to make protectionist noises, and to pressure the Chinese to allow their currency to float upwards. Never mind warnings from Fed chairman Alan Greenspan that the Chinese banking system, with perhaps 40 percent to 50 percent of its loans "nonperforming" (bankers' euphemism for "can't make the payments"), is in no condition to withstand the rapid withdrawal of deposits that might follow such a revaluation of the currency. "Our fight against nonperforming loans will be long and arduous," says China's bank regulator, as he struggles to get the banks in shape to meet foreign competition that will flood in 2006, when World Trade Organization rules require China to grant foreign banks full privileges.

So intent are the politicians to show that they are taking action that they have put a quota on our imports of brassieres and nightgowns from China. Of course, the production of these items will simply shift to Central America, and no new jobs will be created in the United States, but no matter. The old Reagan motto, "Don't just do something, stand there," can't survive the fear of losing votes in key states.

Last year, China's economy grew at the robust rate of more than 9 percent, the fastest in seven years and "a milestone in the history of China," according to Li Deshui, head of the National Bureau of Statistics. And that's according to official figures: Many experts say the actual growth rate was well into double digits. Not even the serious SARS outbreak could derail the Chinese economy, which seems likely to quadruple in size between now and 2020, as it has done in the past two decades.

Consider these indicators of China's economic performance:

* Tax revenues increased by 20 percent last year;
* Profits soared by 40 percent;
* Manufacturing activity is rising at an annual rate of more than 10 percent;
* China is now the most popular place on earth for foreign investors to put their money, with investors from America, Taiwan, and Hong Kong leading the parade;
* China added over $400 billion to its foreign exchange reserves in 2003;
* If we correct for exchange rate anomalies, China accounted for a larger share of world growth in the past seven years than did the United States—25 percent versus 20 percent.

No need to go on with this parade of statistics, which gives comfort to all those who believe that rising prosperity, the emergence of an entrepreneurial middle class, and the accompanying opening of communication channels with the outside world will result in political as well as economic liberalization. But little comfort to those policymakers concerned with correcting imbalances in world trade.

Start with the fact that China has yet to live up to the commitments it made when it was admitted to the World Trade Organization. Add to that such insensitivity to the notion of intellectual property that China is home to

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manufacturers of "pirated" CDs, videos, and DVDs. Indeed, on a recent trip to China, Commerce Secretary Don Evans was able to purchase a bootleg DVD of Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* days after it had been released in U.S. movie theaters. And keep in mind that China is insisting that access to U.S. technology be part of any large-scale purchase contract: GE, for example, had to form joint ventures with China's state-owned power companies, which will have access to GE technology, in order to sell billions of dollars' worth of generating equipment to China.

But that is the least of the policy problems created by the rise of China as an exporting powerhouse, and it may well prove to be a transient one. The more difficult one is the insistence of the Chinese authorities on pegging their currency to the dollar. That means that no matter how large America's trade deficit with China becomes, no readjustment of currency values of the sort that a free market would produce can occur. In the absence of a fixed exchange rate policy, China's currency would rise, making Chinese goods more expensive in America, and American goods cheaper in China, reducing our trade deficit.

This has resulted in howls of "unfair competition" from affected American firms and their political allies. "Unfair" to *competitors*, of course, is another way of saying that trade with China has been a bonanza for *consumers*. For example, Wal-Mart accounts for a full 10 percent of the total U.S. trade deficit with China—which explains why the world's largest retailer is able to put such low sticker prices on those T-shirts, sneakers, and other products that American consumers have come to love. Consumers, however, are not as well organized as the producers whose oxen are being gored. A large coalition of business groups and a gaggle of congressmen want to impose a 27.5 percent tariff on all Chinese goods to offset that country's undervalued currency.

The tariff won't pass, but the Chinese may concede a token revaluation, say on the order of 5-10 percent, in a slight bow to international pressure that won't seriously reduce the growth of job-creating export industries. But unless their policy of sterilizing the flood of money that is descending on the country—draining money from the market by selling IOUs and tucking away the money received for those IOUs in the vault of the central bank—proves unable to contain inflation, it is likely that the Chinese authorities will hold to some form of currency pegging. As Wen told the People's Congress last week: The exchange rate should "maintain basic stability at a reasonable and balanced level"—Chinese for, "We agree with Greenspan that now is not the time to float our currency." After all, say the Chinese, last month we had an overall trade deficit of almost $8 billion.

Whatever happens with currency exchange rates, one thing is certain: China will do nothing to threaten the export-led job creation on which it will remain dependent until its own consumers can afford to carry the economy. Which may not be such a bad thing, from America's point of view. China has been sending us sneakers and electrical goods, and we have been sending it little bits of paper with the pictures of American presidents on them. Chinese authorities have been using the dollars they earn in trade to buy the U.S. treasury bonds that are being printed as fast as the Bush budget deficit rises. That helps to keep U.S. interest rates lower than they might be, which in turn is helping the American economy to grow at a rate the Bush team feels necessary if the president and first lady are not to start ordering packing crates in a few months.

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And therein lies a long-term problem. Can the world's only superpower have sufficient freedom of action on the international stage if a potential adversary is in a position to damage its economy? Put differently, can the world's largest debtor tell its largest creditors what to do should a clash of interests arise? Let's hope so. And let's hope, too, that the many experts who think the Chinese economy is overheating, and is beyond the control of the authorities, are wrong. ("China in 2004 feels like Nasdaq in 1999," warns the *Wall Street Journal*.)

The Tiananmen Square protests and the subsequent vicious crackdown were caused in part by consumers' inability to cope with rising prices, a bit of history that has the regime on the alert now that the first signs of inflation seem to be making an appearance—best estimates are that the current inflation rate is somewhere between 4 and 6 percent.

The threat of overheating is not unremarked by the authorities. Guo Shuqing, head of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, has announced that restrictions on investment abroad by firms earning dollars will be relaxed, easing the growth of the domestic money supply. And Wen Jiabao last week said that tightened environmental and safety requirements would be used to slow the growth of the steel, aluminum, cement, and other industries that seem to be adding capacity at a rate unwarranted by prospective demand, stimulated instead by improvi-

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dent lending by banks that already have made too many bad loans (some $860 billion worth). The goal will be to bring growth down from last year's almost-10 percent to 7 percent.

As with other matters, this problem is more complicated in the Chinese context than it at first seems. Overheating produces inflation, generally considered undesirable. But a bit of inflation, driving up the price of agricultural products, is seen by the Chinese authorities as a handy way of redistributing income from richer urban consumers to poorer rural farmers. Absent such redistribution from city to country, the widening disparity between urban and rural incomes might cause serious unrest among the 800 million Chinese who have not migrated to the growing cities. In addition, rural poverty inhibits needed growth in consumer demand for the rising output of China's factories—which is why the premier announced last week that he was cutting agricultural taxes by 1 percent.

But the authorities worry that the inflationary process, once under way, will take on a life of its own, and prove impervious to efforts to keep it at useful but nonthreatening levels. Which explains why they have decided to slow the growth of the money supply and hold new bank lending to 13 percent below last year's level. "Money and credit have been growing too fast. The structure of credit is irrational and the financial system carries many problems and perilous risks," Wen Jiabao told a meeting of representatives of the institutions that make up China's financial sector.

In the end, of course, all of these economic issues—the trade deficit, competition for commodities, China's investment in U.S. Treasuries—pale into insignificance compared with the question of whether China will prove to be a vigorous but peaceful competitor on the world's economic and political stage, or a more belligerent player, intent on reclaiming Taiwan and pursuing other goals that put it on a collision course with America. Which brings us to the ongoing debate over isolation versus engagement.

In fact, this is no debate at all. We are in no position to isolate or refuse to "engage" China—it is simply too big a player on the international economic scene to treat as a Libya or even an Iran. The real question is whether the dynamics of Chinese economic development will increase the likelihood of the success of an engagement policy by providing the Chinese leadership with a greater incentive to preserve a stable order in the Asia-Pacific region than it had before the recent period of rapid economic growth. In short, will a richer China be more like us?

Bill Emmott, editor in chief of the *Economist*, points out that when Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1978, China was still getting poorer relative to the West, and was having difficulty feeding its growing population. As Emmott puts it, "Deng's solution was simple: 'capitalism,' which he called 'socialism with Chinese characteristics.'" And Deng added, "to get rich is glorious." No believer in capitalism could have put it better. Indeed, whatever our differences with China, we seem to agree on at least one basic economic principle: The path to national wealth lies in providing incentives to entrepreneurs to get rich by taking risks, and to workers to work hard to maximize their incomes.

So it is no surprise that the Chinese leadership has opened party membership to entrepreneurs, that several Chinese entrepreneurs are rich enough to be buying up and bringing home Chinese art treasures that had left the country, that China is now beginning to open its financial sector to international competition, and that a new generation of brand-conscious youngsters is snapping up everything from cell phones to laptops, sunglasses, and American and British university degrees. As Hung Huang, publisher of the Chinese version of *Seventeen*, put it to the *Economist*, "They are like any teenagers that you would find in a rich suburb of Chicago or St. Louis. They want the latest model, they want their computer, they want their camcorder, they want cool Swatches." Not to mention cars: Beijing is already choked with traffic, even though the automobile has only begun to replace the bicycle on China's streets. If the idea that "they" are becoming more like "us" is the good omen some take it to be, there is hope that these goods-hungry teenagers will grow into the goods-hungry adults that Americans believe are less likely to forfeit the good life by roiling international waters.

Equally important, China's leaders seem to recognize that the continued success of their nation's economy depends on important institutional reforms, most notably the institution of the rule of law to protect private property. As Gregory Chow, emeritus professor of political economy at Princeton, notes, "A modern market economy requires the existence of a set of rules of the game for the economic players who compete in the market place." He goes on to cite China's Bankruptcy Law of 1986 and Commercial Bank Law of 1995 as important examples of "a set of legal institutions to enforce the rules of the game governing economic behavior in a market economy." Others are not so certain that the new bankruptcy laws are optimal, but the point remains: Movement appears to be in the right direction. The *Wall Street Journal*, the self-professed champion of free market capitalism, captioned a recent editorial "From Mao to Locke," and expressed joy

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at China's decision to add to its constitution a clause stating that "lawful private property is not to be violated." Of course, those who have watched the changing definitions applied to the word "lawful" by another reforming Communist, Vladimir Putin, are right to urge a wait-and-see attitude towards what might be, but is not certainly, an important reform.

That leaves the knotty question of China's refusal to protect intellectual property rights, a policy that has forced Blockbuster to abandon efforts to break into the Chinese market. Some in the business of creating movies, music, and other intellectual property tell me that their pleas will fall on increasingly receptive ears as China and its homegrown industries accumulate more and more of their own intellectual property. They say that it will be self-interest, rather than international pressure, that will finally persuade Chinese authorities to crack down on counterfeiting and other forms of theft of intellectual property. At the same time, these American creators of intellectual property are keeping pressure on the Chinese to recognize that not all property is theft.

There is hope that these goods-hungry teenagers will grow into goods-hungry adults who won't want to roil international waters.

Those who predict that self-interest will persuade the Chinese to join international efforts to protect intellectual property base their hope on a little appreciated aspect of the development of the Chinese economy. Contrary to popular perception, China is not a low-tech manufacturer. As the Congressional Research Service notes in a recent report: "In the past decade, the most dramatic increases in the value of Chinese imports to the United States have not been in sectors such as footwear and apparel—traditional labor-intensive industries in which China is already quite competitive—but in advanced technology sectors, such as office and data processing machines, telecommunications and sound equipment, electrical machinery and appliances." Japan's Pioneer Corporation is just one of an increasing number of firms that have moved high-tech manufacturing plants, and research centers, to Shanghai, where Sharp, NEC, and Toshiba are busily recruiting Chinese engineers to staff their new research centers and laboratories.

So China and its many emerging manufacturers have an increasing stake in supporting a stable regime for the protection of intellectual property. Even more important, an increasingly prosperous China has a larger stake in a stable world order, which may be one of the reasons that it appears to be cooperating with our efforts to defuse the controversy with North Korea. And more important still: China is creating an entrepreneurial and middle class that must have open access to information if it is to prosper in global markets. Which may be why China has recently opened its media industries to greater private investment. As a result of commercialization of media outlets, the proliferation of cable channels and new magazines, and the spread of the Internet, "The government is losing the levers to control the media," according to Liu Junning, described by the press as "a Beijing scholar and advocate of democracy."

No one should doubt that there will be problems between the United States and China in the years ahead. For every sign of progress, there is a sign that such progress may prove ephemeral. The media provide a good example. The liberalization that some see is no done deal: "We must insist on the correct leadership of public opinion," says Zhu Hong, of the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television.

Nor is it certain that such economic reform as is now being allowed will continue if liberalization in the economic sphere threatens the hold of the regime on political power. Again, we have the Putin model: Privatization and liberalization are fine, so long as they don't threaten the hold of the regime on the political process. And only a Pangloss would believe that such liberalization as will occur in the economic sphere will create sufficient freedom of religion and respect for human rights to satisfy those of us who value those freedoms and rights so highly. But (and here I suspect I differ from some of my colleagues in these pages) we cannot remake the world in our image. What we can do is encourage such developments as reduce the threat to our own safety. On that list we certainly should include encouraging the spread of economic reform and affluence in China, while continuing to support the drive of the newly affluent for greater freedom, and holding fast to our alliance with Taiwan.

Such a policy—avoiding protectionism, encouraging economic growth in China while holding to our principles—is within our grasp. After all, we are not without cards to play: China needs our markets every bit as much as we need the Chinese to buy our government's IOUs. Perhaps more: Closure of our markets to China's goods would inconveniently drive up prices in Wal-Mart, but would result in massive unemployment and social unrest in China. China's trade surplus is America's weapon. That's something the Chinese have to keep in mind when discussing geopolitical issues with us. ♦

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Against All Odds

A flourishing democracy takes root in South Africa.

By Max Boot

Cape Town, South Africa

Happily, I do not recall writing anything about South Africa in 1994 when the country adopted majority rule. If I had, I would no doubt have parroted the prevailing wisdom of sophisticated circles: There goes another one. Another African country descending into the heart of darkness. Another place where the economy will get trashed, ethnic violence will break out, and the middle class will flee.

There was every reason to believe this would be the case. The African National Congress was stacked with card-carrying Communists, many of them trained in the Soviet Union. Like so many other "liberation" fighters, once they grabbed power, they would surely be as oppressive as their colonial predecessors. The press coverage of the 1994 handover called to mind the cliché, "one man, one vote, one time."

Well, that was 10 years and two general elections ago, with a third due on April 14. It's time to acknowledge how wrong the naysayers were. A flourishing democracy has taken root in South Africa's rocky soil. A government of former Communists and trade unionists is pursuing fiscal and monetary policies that could have been designed by Goldman Sachs. Whites haven't been hounded out of the country; instead, some who emigrated in the past decade are trickling back.

In a local newspaper, Rian Malan, a prominent Afrikaner writer, recently issued a giant mea culpa: "On this day, 10 years ago, I was hiding gold coins under floorboards and trying to get my hands on a gun before the balloon went up. As a white South African, I was fully expecting war as right-wing Boers and Bantustan chiefs conspired to annihilate Nelson Mandela's people. . . . In my view, peace would never come. There was too much history, too much pain and anger. . . .

"What's it like now? . . . This is a question I've been dreading, but if you must know, it's amazing: peaceful, stable, one of the fastest-growing tourist destinations on the planet. In season, buses park on the road above our house, disgorging foreigners who gape at the view, dumbfounded, then turn their binoculars on us, clearly wondering what it's like to live in this paradise."

That is pretty much my impression, too, having just spent a week in South Africa, along with some other American policy wonks, as a guest of its government. Cape Town, the country's second-largest city and one of two capitals (Pretoria is the other), is a bit like San Francisco: full of trendy cafes, secondhand clothing stores, young people with pierced eyebrows, and world-class restaurants. Nearby are green vineyards, brown hills, and beaches with sand as white as the old ruling establishment.

The placidity of Cape Town comes as a bit of a surprise to anyone who has followed the country only through the news media. Whenever you read about South Africa, the news tends to be negative—mainly AIDS and crime. Those problems are very real, but so is South Africa's progress. The "South African miracle," as some are calling it, upsets the smug assumption that democracy is fit only for a small club of mainly Western countries. This prejudice, once limited to the political right, is increasingly prevalent on the left. "Progressive" reactionaries screech that Iraqis, for one, aren't ready for self-government. Granted, South Africa was much better prepared for the transition than Iraq, but it's sobering to recall how many people were equally pessimistic about its prospects a mere decade ago.

When apartheid fell in 1994, there was a widespread expectation that the ANC would turn the country upside down—punish the whites, take their wealth, and redistribute it to the oppressed masses. Nothing of the kind happened. ANC leaders who had spent decades in exile across Africa had learned much from the mistakes of other postcolonial governments. They decided to chart a different path, and in Nelson Mandela they had a leader with sufficient stature—the kind that comes from spending 27 years in prison—to ignore the

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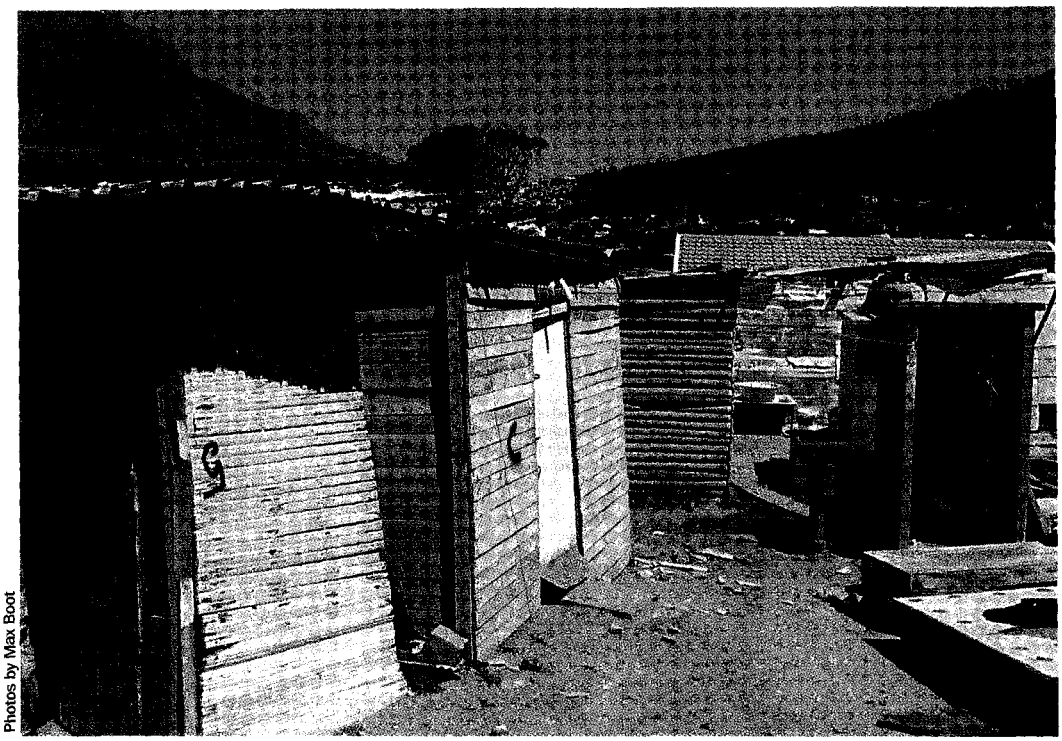
demands of the militants.

Instead of Nuremberg-style tribunals, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up whose goal was to document the crimes of apartheid, not to punish the guilty. Only a handful of the worst apartheid thugs have been jailed.

Instead of redistribution, the government focused on economic growth. A number of state-owned enterprises were wholly or partially privatized. Farm subsidies were eliminated. Tariffs and taxes were reduced. The South African Reserve Bank has pursued a tight monetary policy that has reduced inflation from almost 10 percent in 1994 to 4 percent today. The rand has appreciated against other currencies including the dollar. The government is now relaxing exchange controls. The only monetary blemish is that interest rates remain high—about 11 percent—which economists here attribute to an unwarranted "risk premium" being demanded for South African bonds in leery foreign markets.



Photos by Max Boot

The township of Imizamo Yethu, south of Cape Town

On the fiscal side, the government has reduced the budget deficit from 10 percent of GDP in 1994 to 2.4 percent in 2004—lower than in the United States. Unlike almost every other African country, South Africa has low foreign debt. It doesn't need World Bank or International Monetary Fund handouts, or the bossy foreign bureaucrats who come with them. The government finances itself with a tax burden that consumes 28 percent of GDP—lower than in Europe, about the same as the United States. Corporate and capital gains tax rates are lower than in the United States. Helped by the lifting of sanctions, South Africa has been growing at 2 to 3 percent in recent years. The economy is no longer entirely dependent on exports of diamonds and precious metals. The manufacturing sector, led by foreign auto companies like DaimlerChrysler, BMW, and Toyota, has been growing fast, and so has the service industry.

With a per capita GDP of $9,409 (adjusted for the cost of living), South Africa is richer than Russia, China, Mexico, Turkey, or Poland, to say nothing of the rest of Africa. That's the good news. The bad news is that the gap between haves and have-nots is the size of the Kalahari Desert. South Africa's income inequalities are exceeded only by Brazil's. About 15 to 20 percent of the people (mainly whites) are as rich as any First Worlders; the rest are as poor as any Third Worlders.

Just a few miles outside Cape Town, with its gleaming office towers and luxury hotels, are shanty towns of almost unimaginable squalor. In one giant township, Khayelitsha, most of the 500,000 blacks live in handmade shacks of tin and sheet metal. The vast majority lack electricity, and they're lucky to have an outhouse. A typical hut is less than 40 square feet—the size of a walk-in closet in one of the seaside mansions located a few miles away. This is the kind of place where wild dogs and little children roam the dusty lanes, men sit around drinking beer at midday, and the mamas do the laundry by hand.

Similar shanty towns surround all of the major cities. The government's focus since 1994 has been on improving basic services in these townships. And, driving around Khayelitsha, one can see utilities going up, small stores opening, and some stucco homes replacing the tin shacks.

The one thing the government has not been able to deliver is enough jobs; more than 30 percent of the population is unemployed. It would have been easy enough to organize giant public works and welfare schemes but, as Zola Skweyiya, the minister in charge of social development, puts it, "We do not want to create a syndrome of dependency on the government." (How often do you hear talk like that in the developing world?)

The government has been pushing a Black Econom-

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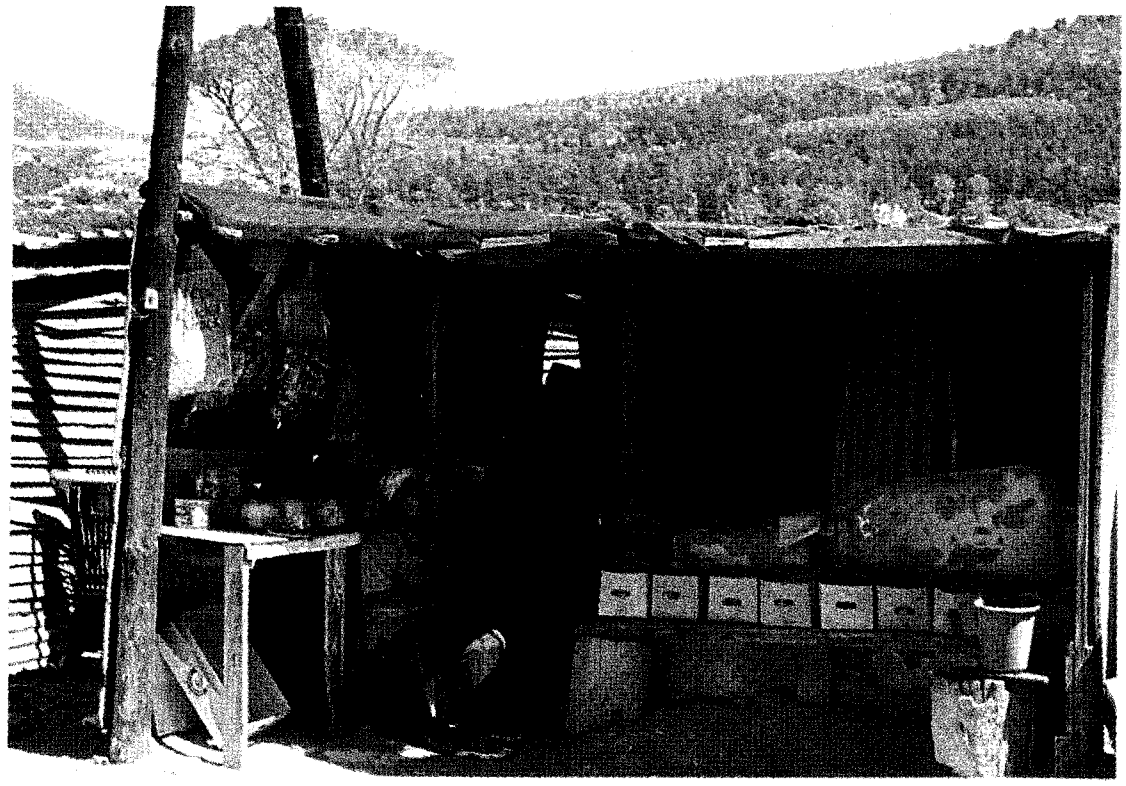

Imizamo Yethu township

ic Empowerment program, whose goal is to transfer 25 percent of land and businesses to blacks over the next 10 years. Like most affirmative action schemes, this has mainly benefited the middle and upper classes, making tycoons of many well-connected former ANC big shots. There's nothing especially wrong with this, but the impoverished masses have been left behind.

The ANC has shown commendable restraint in not pursuing the redistributionist schemes urged by its left-wing coalition partners, the Communist party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The question is whether the ANC will continue resisting calls for Zimbabwe-style land grabs even if the majority remains desperately poor. In all probability it will, so long as President Thabo Mbeki and his close associates remain in charge, but the continued existence of mass poverty casts a shadow on the country's future. Such extreme deprivation, existing in close proximity with great wealth, is a proven incubator of various social pathologies.

Since 1994, South Africa's crime rate has spiked to among the highest in the world. In the last few years, it has at least stopped rising and stabilized, though at very high levels; a few categories, like murder, have seen small reductions. Attacks on whites receive a disproportionate share of media attention, but most crime is black on black. Whites have taken refuge behind walled compounds plastered with security company stickers promising "armed response." The government, which had initially focused on revamping the security services, is now fighting crime by increasing police funding and manpower.

The AIDS crisis has also been a story of disaster followed by a conscientious if belated response. South Africa has more people with HIV than any other country: some 5 million of its 45 million people, of whom about 500,000 have full-blown AIDS. Mbeki, who has governed since 1999, was dismayingly slow to address this epidemic. Even as hundreds of thousands died, he publicly mused about whether HIV really caused AIDS and whether anti-retroviral (ARV) medications were really effective. As a consequence, only about 30,000 South Africans are now getting ARVs, almost all of them from private health plans.

Finally, late last year, under pressure of public protests endorsed by Nelson Mandela, Mbeki unveiled a comprehensive AIDS prevention and treatment program that includes handing out free ARVs. But even now the government is showing little urgency. Mbeki made only one passing mention of AIDS in his State of the Nation address in early February, and his health minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, continues to suggest that beetroot, ginger, and other folk remedies are as important as cutting-edge drugs.

The government's dilatory response to this public-health disaster underlines some of the weaknesses of South African democracy. The ANC controls 66 percent of parliamentary seats and seven of nine provinces (the last two it rules in coalition with other parties). Its members of Parliament have little independence. They are all selected by the party central office and run in nationwide elections; they are not elected by local constituencies, as in Britain, where backbenchers can challenge and even overthrow their leaders. In South Africa, the president's displeasure can end the career of an ANC MP, and so the MPs are afraid of crossing him, even when, as during the AIDS crisis, he has displayed terrible judgment.

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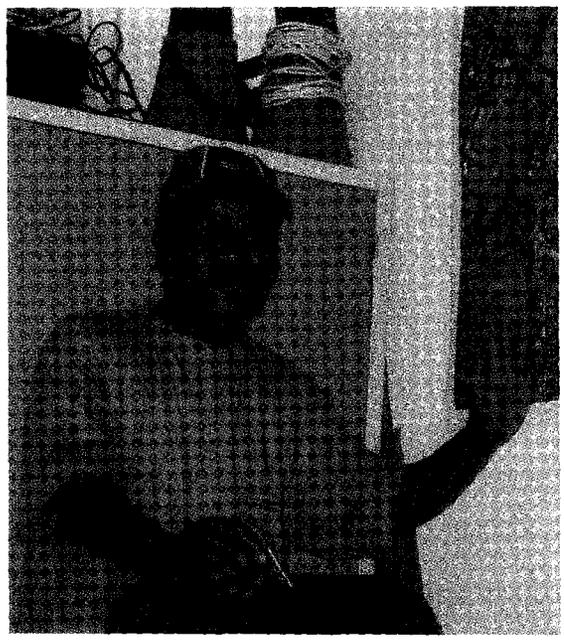
There is no chance of the ANC losing the next election or the one after that. For the foreseeable future South Africa seems destined to be a one-party democracy like India prior to the 1990s or Japan today. This is far from ideal, but freedom can be maintained by vibrant civil institutions, which, fortunately, exist in abundance in South Africa.

A number of opposition parties, led by the Democratic Assembly, which appeals mainly to whites, sit in Parliament and fiercely criticize the ANC. So do many newspapers. There are also plenty of nongovernmental organizations; one of the most effective is the Treatment Action Campaign which led the fight against AIDS. And then there is the independent judiciary. The Constitutional Court has ruled against the government in many cases, including one in which it required the use of ARVs to treat pregnant women with HIV. A lower court ruled against black squatters who had illegally occupied white-owned farmland, Zimbabwe-style; they were forced to vacate.



"Our enemies are our friends now": Kenny Thokwe

Opposition politicians may gripe that the government is highhanded and arrogant; some even say they have had their phones tapped by the intelligence service. But there is no sign of the kind of repression evident in other struggling democracies such as Russia. Public debate is free-wheeling and often vitriolic. No one from President Mbeki on down is spared criticism. And opponents of the government have no fear of winding up in jail or the morgue.

The most inspiring thing about South Africa is that there seems to be so little rancor. From Yugoslavia to Rwanda, ethnic groups have exacted a brutal revenge on those who once victimized them—but not in South Africa. In the township of Imizamo Yethu, south of Cape Town, we met a community leader named Kenny Thokwe, who, as an ANC activist, was in and out of jail during the 1980s. One of his closest friends was shot to death by an apartheid policeman, he says, yet when he visits his hometown, he shares a beer with the very same man, his former oppressor, his friend's killer. "We learn to forget yesterday," Thokwe says. "We forgive them. Our enemies are our friends now."

This spirit has helped make South Africa an example to many of its neighbors. President Mbeki has emerged as the leader of the new African Union, which he organized to replace the ineffectual Organization of African States. (He beat out Muammar Qaddafi for the AU presidency.) He has also launched NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) to help other states establish freedom and prosperity. Many South African firms are doing business across the continent, and South African soldiers have been dispatched as peacekeepers to Burundi and Congo. During a private meeting with our group, the nattily dressed president said that a number of other African leaders, from Congo to Nigeria, have been calling him for advice.

Sadly, Mbeki has not used his influence to counter the brutal policies of his neighbor, Robert Mugabe. Even as repression and famine sweep over Zimbabwe, Mbeki refuses to condemn Mugabe's assaults on private property, the judiciary, and the free press. Mbeki has actually described Zimbabwe's rigged 2002 elections as "free and fair." He argues that his soft approach, seeking negotiations to ease Mugabe out of office, will be more effective than the confrontational style of Britain and the United States. But it is also the case that Mugabe is popular with ANC militants who like the way he's socked it to whites. And Mbeki has to stay on the good side of those ANC militants. But if he fails to negotiate a peaceful end to the crisis in Zimbabwe, Mbeki will pay a heavy price—not only in chaos spilling across his northern border, but also in lost credibility as the leading statesman of Africa.

It is very much in America's interest for Mbeki—who is said to have a good relationship with George W. Bush—to emerge stronger than ever. Africa's problems have taken on added urgency since 9/11, as outsiders realize its most disordered states are breeding grounds for international terrorism. And yet there is little willingness in the United States to commit the money and manpower to straighten out Liberia, Sierra Leone, Congo, and Somalia. Our best bet is to encourage the emergence of a few regional hegemons to spread liberal values. Based on its track record so far, South Africa appears to be the best candidate for the job. ♦

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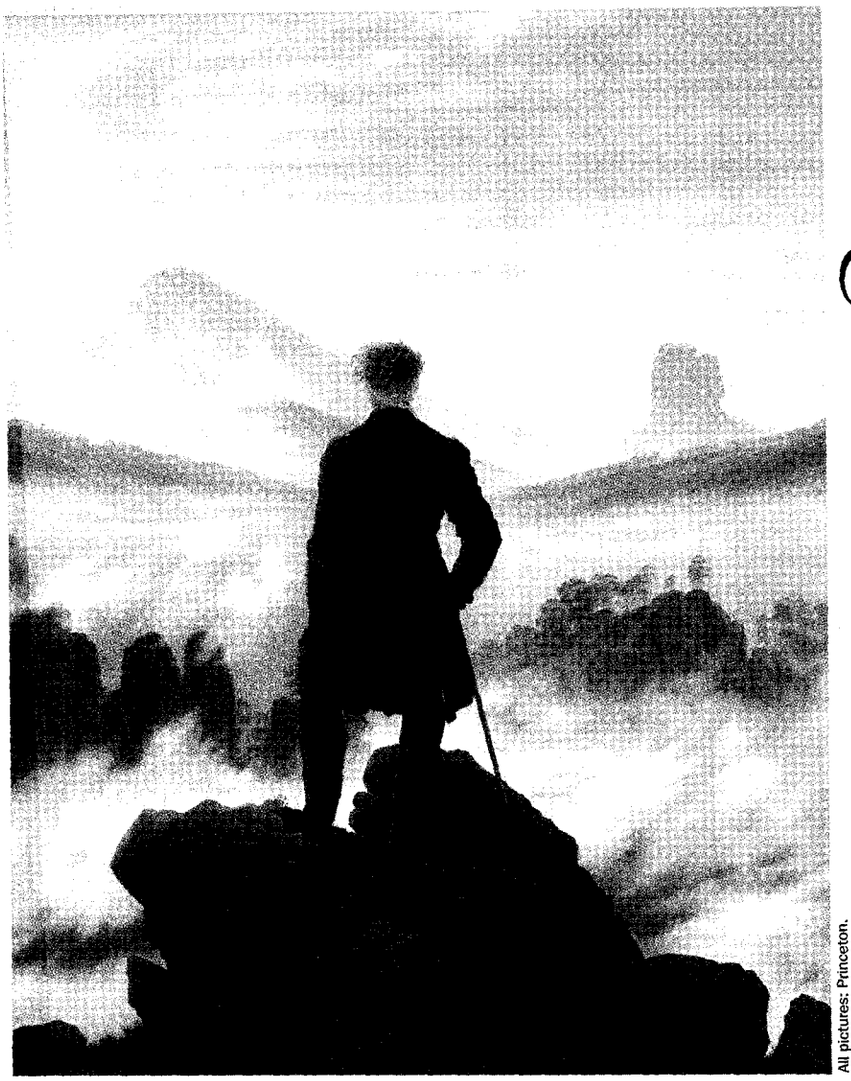
Human, All-Too-Human

The Bioethics Council issues a book of readings

By Gregory Feeley



All pictures: Princeton.

Caspar David Friedrich's Wanderer Above a Sea of Fog *(c. 1818).*

Man is a reed, Pascal asserts, "but he is a thinking reed," and he retains a nobility that animals lack "because he knows that he dies and the advantage which the universe has over him; the universe knows nothing of this." Pascal is not among the great minds gathered in *Being Human: Readings from the President's Council on Bioethics*, but his famous line frames one of the central questions the volume proposes to raise: Does our humanity reside in our reasoning facility, or must a less rational, perhaps less material dimension be admitted?

Being Human is an anthology of prose and verse, beginning with ancient texts and proceeding to the present day. Comprising both fiction and nonfiction, the readings are mostly brief: stories, chapters of longer works, short poems, and selections—few more than a dozen pages long. No editor is given, but the introduction is by Leon Kass, the council's chairman, and the preface to each selection was prepared by Rachel Wildavsky.

Most of the ninety-five readings are good, and many are wonderful, even though some of the excerpts are mere snippets, which at times seem oddly trimmed. The quality of the translations is erratic. The passage chosen from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, for instance, is from the Penguin edition, a poor translation last revised in 1972. The old Lowe-Porter rendition of Thomas Mann into English is notoriously bad, and the four selections from Homer all use the venerable translations of Richard Lattimore, although those by Robert Fitzgerald and Robert Fagles have long superseded them.

Being Human
Readings from the President's Council on Bioethics
GPO, 628 pp., Free

All the readings aim us at the question of what it means to be human. Humans experience the appetites of animals—but we can think about those experiences, just as we can foresee and ponder our coming deaths. Mortality haunts all of these readings, even the love poems and short stories that celebrate children and family. "The long habit of living indisposeth us for dying," says Sir Thomas Browne in *Urn-Burial* (unfortunately not included here), and much of human nature may indeed reside in that apprehension of mortality which we all have, as our pets do not.

But can literature offer wisdom in the sense the volume's editors wish readers to find it? Lorrie Moore's great story, "People Like That Are the Only People Here," dramatizes a young mother's discovery that her infant has cancer. Its theme catches at our heart. A poorly written account of such an

Gregory Feeley's novel Arabian Wine *and novella* Giliad *will appear this spring.*

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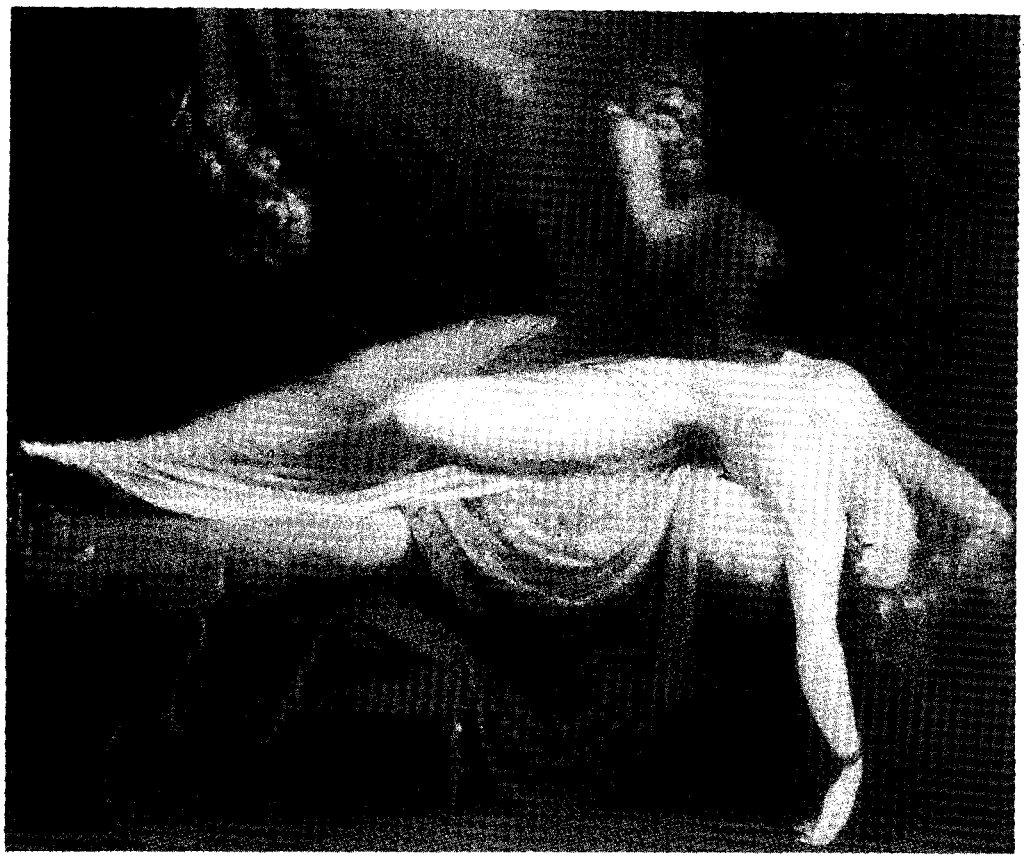

Henry Fuseli's The Nightmare *(1781).*

ordeal would exert faint power over us, despite the fact that the account might (unlike Moore's fiction) be true. The ability of a story or poem—or even, to a significant degree, an essay—to move us is bound up more in its rhetorical power than in the gravity of its subject or the wisdom of what it seems to be saying, a fact that nearly every reader (newly affected, say, by a fresh reading of Moore's story) finds hard to accept. A volume such as this, arranged by subject matter and prefaced by study questions, urges us to ponder the insight of great writers in a way that may lead us away from the genuine worth of the writers' contributions.

The theme of Richard Selzer's short story "Whither Thou Goest" (about a young widow who releases her murdered husband's body for organ harvesting) fits tidily into the stated business of its section in *Being Human*: "Are We Our Bodies?" But the fit is incidental to the story's virtues and perhaps even at odds with them. Selzer, a surgeon as well as a fiction writer, writes stories that generally take the form of case histories. His story is less memorable for the ethical issues it dramatizes—which ten successive questions from the preface bid us to consider—and more for its abrupt moments of mysteriously telling detail, as when the bereaved woman stands before a butcher and finds herself looking away from his bloody hands "as though they were his privates."

The best reason to read these works resides in such moments, resistant to summary and uncertain in implication. Literature offers not maps but landscapes, whose correspondence to our own topography is too obscure for us to employ them easily. Vladimir Bukovsky's "Account of Torture" describes the KGB breaking his hunger strike by force-feeding him through a nasal tube. "Bukovsky's torturers assaulted and injured his body," the preface tells us. "Did they assault and injure Bukovsky?" The suggestion that we answer "No" leans in like an interlocutor's breath, but the reader may think to balk. Bukovsky's brief passage gives little support to the notion that the self inhabits an ineffable realm that crude physical assault cannot finally reach.

The readings in *Being Human*, Kass claims, are offered in order to raise questions rather than lay down answers. In furtherance of this, the prefaces to the selections all culminate in a series of questions. The reader is invited to ponder, but not told what to decide. The problem, as the reader soon discovers, is that to identify the boundaries of an issue is to impose a shape upon it. The string of queries that lead into each reading zero in on a specific theme. Every one of the pref-

Remedios Varo's Phenomenon of Weightlessness *(1963).*

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aces leaves readers feeling they are being steered, solicitously but firmly, in a desired direction.

Perhaps the prefaces' faintly insistent tone is an inescapable result of someone having to write ninety-five of them, each (as Kass, who seems to have misgivings about them, says in his introduction) "suitable for discussion by groups reading together or for study by individuals reading alone." Kass acknowledges that the "more didactic tone" of some may "get between author and reader," and that the council's "specialized concerns" may end up urging a reductive reading. He settles for encouraging the reader to take the prefaces "with a proverbial grain of salt," but he might have done better to rethink their necessity, for their nearly hundred pages constitute the volume's weakest (and single largest) element.

The volume shows a pronounced emphasis on medical matters, with most of the contemporary short stories and essays by physicians: Lewis Thomas, Perri Klass, Selzer (who is represented in the volume four times, as much as Homer and more than Shakespeare). This seems excessive, but that does result in the inclusion of Moore's "People Like That Are the Only People Here," whose power to startle and move readers seems undiminished after repeated readings. Here in particular, the preface misses the giddy, panicked comedy in Moore's brilliant dramatization of the pediatric oncology unit where parents swap war stories in the Tiny Tim Lounge while waiting for their stricken children to improve or die. The protagonist (not "proudly countercultural," as the preface suggests, but merely an academic New Yorker still feeling culture shock from a recent move to "the Prairie") comes in for severe censure from the preface, which sternly reads the vivid extremities of her responses as failings of character. It is another pitfall of reading literature for its wisdom: The reader too intent on extracting a lesson from a work of fiction will end up imposing one.

Being Human is full of good things, and no reader will have already read all of them. Richard Selzer's "Imelda," new to me, is a deeply affecting account (not a short story, as the preface identifies it; to read the essay thinking its events are fictitious would be to diminish it) of a humanitarian operation gone disastrously wrong, and its effect on the young Selzer and the remote senior surgeon he looked up to. It is as disturbing and moving, after repeated readings, as anything else in the volume.

Humanity is the condition we can never explore from without: The thinking reed reflects on its limitations only in ways defined by those limitations. Perhaps man is unique "because he knows that he dies," as Pascal put it—or perhaps "what makes humans human is precisely that they do not know the future," as Moore's protagonist at one point is told. If both cannot be true, both are beautifully expressed, and it is very human of us to have trouble separating one from the other. What literature can say about being human reaches us by routes more sinuous and complex than the editors here acknowledge, by a ride whose bumps and sways matter more than the delivery of its cargo. ♦

Husbanding Men

Dr. Laura sees where feminism went astray.

BY TAMMY BRUCE

America has, at present, a 52 percent divorce rate, "no-fault" laws that have turned what is supposed to be a unique commitment for life into serial polygamy, and a nearly complete amnesia about the fact that children suffer in single-parent households. The sanctity of marriage is at such a low ebb, it's not surprising the idea of trying to redefine marriage to include homosexuals has gained so much ground in recent years. In a country in which marriage seems to mean so little, what argument can heterosexuals make to retain their monopoly on the empty institution?

The Proper Care & Feeding of Husbands
by Laura Schlessinger
HarperCollins, 180 pp., $24.95

The radio personality Dr. Laura Schlessinger may have come closest to understanding why American marriage has broken down so badly. In her new book, *The Proper Care & Feeding of Husbands*, her idea is simple: The major cause of the American divorce epidemic is the refusal or inability of women to care for their husbands. Schlessinger brazenly insists that a wife should treat her husband with respect, that learning about his needs is a good thing, and that making him feel dignified and needed improves women's lives and marriage.

Using the formula that has made Schlessinger's radio show successful, *The Proper Care & Feeding of Husbands* examines problems submitted by listeners and offers advice tailored to the real-life situations in which people find themselves. Schlessinger's personal and no-nonsense style explains her popularity, and this new book is her seventh *New York Times* bestseller. For years, attempts have been made to silence her—specifically because her values-based perspective challenges leftist cultural decay. But the success of *The Proper Care & Feeding of Husbands* is another indication that her message is one Americans want and need.

Schlessinger rightly points out the state of personal relations between

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men and women in this country are in trouble, and not always simply from failures of behavior. American women, in particular, have been systematically miseducated and misinformed for nearly four decades. I was president of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Organization for Women from 1990 to 1996, and I served two years on NOW's national board of directors. I complained even then that the biggest failure of the modern feminist movement was its leaving men behind.

Somewhere along the line, the fight for equality with men became an effort to have independence from men. And many of our current cultural predicaments are due in part to the condemning of traditional institutions and culture by the women's movement over the past forty years. The message of the feminist establishment has been, in Gloria Steinem's famous words, that "a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle." With a mantra like that, it was inevitable we would create women unable or unwilling to understand the men in their lives—much less treat them with dignity and celebrate them as husbands, fathers, and brothers.

With men universally demonized as rapists, warmongers, and sexual harassers, with masculinity itself defined as a problem, it's really no wonder women's sense of how to interact with men faded away. Young women from the 1970s through the 1990s were routinely told that marriage was by definition rape and that heterosexuality itself constituted "sleeping with the enemy." Many women chose not to marry, put off having children, and began to experiment with their sexuality in efforts to "find" themselves, free from the chains of society and the dangerous parasite of men.

The Proper Care & Feeding of Husbands is not a theoretical work, by any means, but what Schlessinger grasps in her popular and intuitive style is something an enormous number of feminists have missed: The freeing of women from the bonds of the family has delivered many of them into a kind of sexual slavery. If women are released from the deep structures of being mothers and daughters and wives and sisters, there isn't any reason for men to think of them anymore as mothers and daughters and wives and sisters. And men, being men, have not surprisingly responded by considering women primarily as sex objects—the only male-female relation left over.

Laura Schlessinger

HarperCollins

So the feminist movement that was going to free women turned out to be the great facilitator of the American playboy, hustler, and pornographer. Sexual freedom and personal liberty turned out to mean that women have to leave their self-respect at the bedroom door. Have you looked, really looked, at the women's magazines in the supermarket lately? From *Cosmopolitan* to *Glamour*, the headlines blast such sentiments as "Be His Love Slave," or "Find Those Spots on Him That Will Make Him Want More," or "What Do Men Really Want in Bed? Our Survey Tells You!" Feminism wasn't supposed to be about the titillation of watching Madonna masturbate on stage, and female dignity wasn't supposed to be about becoming someone's love slave.

Of course, when Britney Spears, Janet Jackson, and Courtney Love are the new generation's feminist icons, why would men think that we actually *want* to be treated with dignity? And while neither a wife nor a husband in a difficult marriage may subscribe to the feminist manifesto, messages promulgated by popular culture have clearly taken their toll on women's understanding. What culture used to know is that women civilize men. Men look to women for cues about how to act and about what is appropriate. The decent early supporters of the feminist movement still knew this, but nowadays it seems to fall to Laura Schlessinger, the supposed anti-feminist, to provide guidance for women who want to know how to improve their lives.

Some of the early reviews of *The Proper Care & Feeding of Husbands* have been brutal and vicious, parroting the rotten old line that occasionally putting one's husband first and making an effort to be a good wife is a sexist throwback to the dark ages. But the book has nonetheless sold phenomenally well, almost three-quarters of a million copies in print in eight weeks, which is a heartening sign. And Schlessinger has just finished a companion volume, a workbook/journal, to be released in August.

Popular culture may finally be shifting back, giving women, from across the social and political spectrum, answers that will actually improve their lives. If women begin to realize they're not sleeping with the enemy, they may find a way to remain married to someone who loves them and is a good partner in life. ♦

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Generalissimo

How Chiang Kai-shek won and lost China—and why it still matters. BY DAVID LOWE

On the website of the Kuomintang, Taiwan's leading opposition party, there's an entry labeled "A Brief History." But you'll find hardly any mention there of the man who dominated the party during the most critical half century in the history of modern China. It is not only in Taiwan that Chiang Kai-shek's memory has been obscured by the passage of time. When Soong Meiling, Madame Chiang Kai-shek, died last October in New York at the age of 105, her obituaries barely acknowledged her husband, concentrating instead on her role in maintaining American support for China during World War II.

Chiang Kai-shek
China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost
by Jonathan Fenby
Carroll & Graf, 562 pp., $30

That the one time authoritarian ruler of Taiwan should be so delicately ignored by a party struggling to regain power in Taiwan's democratic presidential election this week is understandable. And perhaps it should be no surprise that a foreign leader who spoke no English and encouraged his American-educated wife to carry on international diplomacy with his most important ally remains a distant figure in the United States today.

In *Chiang Kai-shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost*, the British journalist and former *South China Morning Post* editor Jonathan Fenby attempts a new account of one of the twentieth century's most enigmatic figures. According to Fenby, Chiang was a unique kind of revolutionary whose republicanism was trumped by a Confucian authoritarianism that permeated his thinking. That Chiang himself was not a penetrating thinker is evident from the platitudes Fenby quotes from his personal diaries. For this first biography of the generalissimo in over a quarter century, the author has decided that the best way to understand Chiang is by concentrating on his pivotal role in the history of China from the fall of the last emperor to the ascendancy of Mao.

For this, Fenby was able to call upon a wealth of sources, including archival materials unavailable to previous historians. It is a story rich with warlords, budding nationalism, frequently shifting military alliances, palace intrigue, corruption, betrayal, and, above all, death and destruction on a massive scale. Throughout it all, Chiang managed to survive through a ruthless opportunism that exploited the factional divisions of his enemies and potential rivals. But survival, in each instance, was but a temporary achievement, with a new crisis always looming somewhere just over the horizon.

The son of a wealthy salt merchant who died when he was nine, Chiang was attracted to the nationalistic teachings of Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Chinese republic that emerged in the wake of the demise of the last dynasty. Sun had founded the Kuomintang on the principles of "Nationalism, Democracy, and the People's Livelihood." His failures to overcome his warlord foes—scattered across China's anarchic and highly fragmented provinces after the 1911 revolution—demonstrated the need for the nationalists to rely on military means to unite and modernize the country. Drawn to military training at an early age, Chiang was made commandant of the Whampoa Military Academy in Guangzhou in 1924. Whampoa was the training ground for the National Revolutionary Army, and it was here that Chiang developed a base of power, creating personal loyalty among those who would become his future commanders.

Succeeding Sun as leader of the party in 1925 following a power struggle, Chiang launched the Northern Expedition the next year, with the help of Soviet advisers provided by Stalin. The military campaign would succeed in unifying much of the country under the Kuomintang. The success of the Northern Expedition owed much to deals Chiang cut with organized criminal gangs and with local warlords: unforgettable characters such as the Dogmeat General and Big-eared Du, Shanghai's drug boss, whose business interests would prosper through his longtime close alliance with Chiang. It also owed much to Chiang's control over China's largest city, the cosmopolitan and freewheeling Shanghai, where Chiang crushed a workers' insurrection in a bloody 1927 purge. That bold act earned him the gratitude of the city's business class, who would become a critical source of funding for his military campaigns.

Five years earlier, Sun had sent his young protégé to Moscow to develop links and to raise funds. It was there that Chiang developed his lifelong hostility to Communists, particularly after the Comintern spurned his mentor's request for direct assistance. "You cannot trust a Communist," he wrote to his second wife Jennie, warning that the Soviets' purpose in sending military advisers to China was to gain a foothold over China's northern territory.

Chiang's relationship with Chinese Communists, who were then in an

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early stage of development under Mao, would dominate much of the next twenty years of his life. During the "Nanking Decade"—beginning in 1928, when much of China was unified under a Kuomintang government led by Chiang—he vowed to wipe out the nascent rural soviets and red armies. His efforts succeeded in forcing the Communists into their "long March" which, as Fenby points out, was largely a failure for Mao and his followers.

But Communists were not the only threat to Chiang's regime. In the early 1930s, Japan had begun to make inroads into northern China, occupying Manchuria and attacking Shanghai. In a bizarre but successful effort to force the generalissimo (as he was known by then) to focus more attention on the invaders from the east, one of his own generals kidnapped Chiang in 1936 in what would come to be known as the "Xi'an incident." Fenby allows this episode, which he recounts in dramatic detail, to serve as his prologue, not so much because it pitted China's leading military and political figure against a drug-addicted playboy he had once dismissed, but rather because its result—Chiang's agreement to form a united front with the Communists—resulted in one of history's great what-ifs: "Had the Xi'an incident not occurred, Mao might well not have survived to become Chiang's successor as ruler of China. That is why the thirteen days in December 1936 constituted a crucial moment of the twentieth century."

In reality, although both sides were committed for purely pragmatic reasons to the country's unity during a time of great peril, "each side was still determined to eliminate the other in the long term." World War II proved to be a highly destructive interlude in this war for China. Weakened by the war as well as by corruption, hyperinflation, and internal division, Chiang's forces were little match for Mao's fanatical and well-disciplined cadres by the time the war was over. In 1949, his military fully collapsed, forcing Chiang to retreat to Taiwan, where he would spend the rest of his life.

All pictures: Carroll & Graf.

Above: Chiang with his mother. Below: Speaking in 1949.

Fenby devotes much attention to the war against Japan and the uneasy relationship it created with the United States. The story of Chiang's constant bickering with his American chief of staff, Joseph Stillwell, is one many will find familiar, though Fenby's placement of much of the blame for the Communist victory on Vinegar Joe himself contrasts with the popular historical accounts of Theodore White and Barbara Tuchman. Fenby also emphasizes the role played by Chiang's wife in ensuring that relations with Washington continued throughout the war.

Meiling had become Chiang's third wife toward the end of 1927 following his early Northern Expedition victories, when he realized that marrying into one of the wealthiest families of China and furthering his political ambitions was worth the relatively minor inconvenience of jettisoning his second wife. A highly manipulative woman of immense personal charm who spoke English with the southern accent she acquired at a small Georgia college she attended before moving on to Wellesley, Meiling became a celebrity in the United States in the 1940s when she traveled the country in search of support for her husband's regime. She addressed a joint session of Congress and was

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asked by President Roosevelt to join her husband at the Allied summit in Cairo in November 1943.

Meiling's older brother T.V. Soong and her brother-in-law H.H. Kung would both play pivotal roles in the Nationalist regime, primarily as financiers and conduits to international financial centers. Fenby deftly presents the tangled relationships within the family, including the hostility to both Chiang and Meiling of her sister Qingling, Sun Yat-sen's leftist widow, who would eventually throw in her lot with the Communists.

Chiang's personal sense of discipline and ability to focus on military imperatives kept him for the most part above the fray of palace politics, but the greed and corruption that accompanied them would weaken his ability to cope with the perpetual crises he faced. Many Americans insisted that U.S. policy resulted in the "loss" of China, but this overlooks such important factors as the impact of the Japanese invasion, Chiang's incompetence, and his inability to consolidate power even at the height of the Nationalists' success.

Fenby's major failing is his decision to end his narrative with the move to Taiwan following the Communists' victory. Was Chiang's twenty-five years of rule over the island not worth a single chapter? The only explanation he gives for ending the book when he does is that the last quarter century of Chiang's life was markedly different from the previous one.

Still, Jonathan Fenby's biography should help rescue the generalissimo from an undeserved obscurity. With all of his faults, Chiang Kai-shek helped forge a certain unity in a country previously weakened by banditry and foreign domination. His Kuomintang regime in Taiwan pulled off the difficult feat of a peaceful transition to liberalism, first economically under his rule and later politically under his son Chiang Ching-kuo—thereby helping set the stage for the first Chinese democracy. Surely that deserves discussion and remembering. ♦

Thus Spake Elisabeth

The will to power of Friedrich Nietzsche's sister.

BY CHRISTIAN D. BROSE

In his writings, Friedrich Nietzsche dreamed of deporting and, in one instance, shooting all of Germany's "anti-Semitic screamers." One can only imagine how vitriolic his hatred of Adolf Hitler would have been. But Nietzsche's philosophy was shoehorned into the Nazi jackboot nonetheless—the credit for which belongs in large part to Nietzsche's younger sister, Elisabeth. Upon her brother's mental and physical collapse in 1889, she appointed herself sole executor of his literary estate and seized his extensive unpublished writings (as well as his pension and royalties).

Nietzsche's Sister and the Will to Power
A Biography of Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche
by Carol Diethe
Univ. of Illinois Press, 214 pp., $34.95

Though Nietzsche died in 1900, Elisabeth worked tirelessly to create the myth that he was the intellectual godfather of National Socialism. She doctored his writings, created phony letters, and published them in her numerous books about Nietzsche's life and ideas. She cobbled together several hundred disparate notes and aphorisms into *The Will to Power*, a book she claimed represented her brother's true philosophic system. In 1914, Elisabeth wrote that the most vigorous supporter of the fatherland would have been her brother (the same brother who wrote that even hearing Germany's national anthem made him feel ill). When Elisabeth began hobnobbing with Hitler in the early 1930s, her brother's legacy became guilty by association.

Because she hoarded Nietzsche's writings, however, no one could authoritatively challenge Elisabeth until years after her death in 1935. Much scholarly elbow grease was needed to debunk "the Nietzsche legend," and one wonders what can be contributed by Carol Diethe's revisionist study, *Nietzsche's Sister and the Will to Power: A Biography of Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche*.

The answer is not much. A former lecturer at Middlesex University in London, Diethe does not pardon Elisabeth's actions, but rather attempts to explain why a girl she believes was "bright and talented" went so far off course. Diethe argues that a "faulty education" left the intelligent Elisabeth disadvantaged and was ultimately to blame for her scholarly atrocities. After all, Diethe writes, Elisabeth did not set out with "deliberate malice." In fact, "her overt intentions always appear to have been good." If this were not inane enough, Diethe adds that Elisabeth "worked very, very hard."

To prove her case, Diethe documents her subject's life chronologically and unearths a wealth of primary material: diaries, grammar workbooks, and correspondence. She even

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All pictures: University of Illinois Press.

Above: Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche in 1861. Below: Waiting to greet Hitler in 1934.

translates and offers as an appendix an untitled novella Elisabeth wrote in her late thirties. Provisionally titled by Diethe "Coffee-Party Gossip about Nora," it is about as dull as it sounds. The author's archival spelunking is ambitious, but the results are such facts as Elisabeth's grade-school award "for immaculate conduct." And when this fails to convince, Diethe editorializes bitterly: "From today's perspective, the restricted syllabus fed to girls under the name of education during the nineteenth century was little short of a scandal." Elsewhere her editorializing is unintentionally humorous. Of Elisabeth's anti-Semitic husband, who attempted to colonize a sliver of Paraguay as *Neu-Germania*, Diethe declares, "Though [Bernhard] Förster was authoritarian, humorless, and eccentric, this does not detract from his passionate campaign against cruelty to animals." Equally funny is Diethe's constant psychoanalytic speculation about Elisabeth's more-than-sisterly affection for her brother: "Perhaps the severe hairstyle with center parting and side bun . . . was a visible expression of her inhibited emotions."

Diethe's efforts to revise scholarly opinion are desperate and unconvincing. Lest we forget, Elisabeth had to take private lessons in her brother's ideas before she could molest them. Diethe mentions this—but not the tutor's assessment of Elisabeth: "Frau Förster-Nietzsche is a complete layman in all that concerns her brother's doctrine. . . . [She] lacks any sense for fine, and even for crude, logical distinctions; her thinking is void of even the least logical consistency; and she lacks any sense of objectivity."

But the fact is, even if Diethe could prove her case, she would still be wrong—for Elisabeth's crimes resulted more from her own moral failings than from intellectual neglect or vague "personality factors." After all, many Nazis were well-educated. Better schooling would not necessarily have eliminated anti-Semitism. Diethe grudgingly admits this halfway through the book and undermines her own thesis. Slinking back to the scholarly status quo, concluding, "my chief accusation against Elisabeth is that she tarnished her brother's name."

True enough, but Walter Kaufmann established that in 1950. So what can be said of Diethe's efforts? Her attempts to make the reader sympathize with poor Elisabeth are unbelievable, and her revisionist character sketch falls flat. She dredges up documentary table-scraps that ultimately prove Nietzsche's sister was neither intelligent nor likable. Her psychoanalytic and feminist presumptions reveal more about the author than her subject. Nietzsche was spot on when, in *Ecce Homo*, he described his sister as his "most *abysmal* thought." ♦

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The Standard Reader

Books in Brief

***Allies: The U.S., Britain, Europe, and the War in Iraq* by William Shawcross (Public Affairs, 261 pp., $20).** William Shawcross is not the fellow you'd expect to defend the effort of Tony Blair and George W. Bush to invade Iraq and topple Saddam Hussein. Shawcross is famous as the nemesis of Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon over the military incursion in Cambodia in 1970. He's also an admirer of the United Nations and a biographer of Rupert Murdoch. But in the short, scintillating *Allies*, Shawcross says Saddam was "an inevitable threat" and insists leaving him in power would have been "both immoral and dangerous." He skewers the French for their "grotesque cynicism" and criticizes German chancellor Gerhard Schröder's anti-American rhetoric as "graceless, reckless, and wrong."

"Twice during the 20th century Europe proved unable to stand alone against totalitarianism," Shawcross writes. "Without the United States, it might either still be collaborating with Nazism or be under the control of the Soviet Union. It is arguable that the refusal of key European countries to stand up to the threat of Saddam Hussein in 2003 showed that it was still capable of failing the test that it flunked in 1936, when it should have threatened force."

Whew! If you read just one book on the Iraq war and its aftermath, this is it. *Allies* is both enlightening and morally invigorating.

—Fred Barnes

***Sons of Camelot: The Fate of an American Dynasty* by Laurence Leamer (William Morrow, 656 pp., $27.95).** It is now axiomatic that in political families the weight of a legacy is at its most crushing just as the talent to sustain it runs out. This is the theme of Laurence Leamer's *Sons of Camelot*, which follows his *The Kennedy Men* and *The Kennedy Women*. The Kennedy excitement ran out with Robert, killed in 1968; and the Kennedy talent has run out with Ted, a gifted legislator who has used his abilities to serve an agenda that has failed to move with the times. For the third generation, now moving up close to their fifties, the political world has been a snare and delusion.

Joe Kennedy II appears a decent sort who was ill served by the political hacks pushing him into Congress before he was ready and the family flacks and coat-holders who cosseted him when a clap on the ear would have helped him grow up. His brother Michael seems a sociopath, beyond redemption or rescue. The saddest is Patrick, Ted's son, who came out of the shipwreck of his parents' marriage with serious drug problems and bought himself a seat in Congress in a desperate search for a foothold.

By this time, the weight of the family scandals had become too much for even the cleanest of Kennedys: In 2002, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend and her cousin Mark Shriver lost races in Maryland to hungrier rivals, who became stars by beating them. It is no wonder that the one "Kennedy" with a viable future is Arnold Schwarzenegger, an immigrant with the raw drive of the Kennedy founders.

The worst thing Joseph P. Kennedy ever did for his family was to insist that Ted enter the Senate in 1962 at age thirty, with no credentials beyond his last name. Despite their advantages, John and Robert Kennedy had to fight hard for their triumphs, take risks, and face setbacks. But those elected on their names in some ways never grow up. "Ted had exacerbated insecurities that he never lost," Leamer writes. "When you did things yourself, you stood on firm ground, and Ted still stood on shifting sands."

These sands were enough to subvert his ambitions: The free ride he got helped produce Chappaquiddick, which ended his hopes for a national future. Ted's nephew, Joe II, elected and then indulged as a Kennedy, paid no price at first for his outbursts of temper. His divorce from his first wife was amiable enough, but his subsequent push to force her into an annulment created a backlash that helped to end his career. Free rides in the end do no one a favor.

—Noemie Emery

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Parody

"The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin-Abd-al-Aziz, has approved the setup of the National Society for Human Rights. . . . They stressed that the society will depend in its activities on the Holy Quran and Sunnah and will help in the achievement of Article 26 of the governing statute stating that the government protects human rights in accordance with Sharia."

—SPA, Saudi Arabia's state-run news agency, March 9, 2004

SAUDI NATIONAL SOCIETY
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Preliminary Recommendations

Many thankful salutations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin-Abd-al-Aziz, and the Janitorial Supreme Leader of the Royal Palace, the Crown Prince Abdullah. While the rights of humans in our glorious kingdom have never been so indulged as in our present fortunate age, we offer some small recommendations to ensure that our Sharia-inspired justice system remains a human-rights beacon for the world.

1. Thievery and amputation go well together, like oil and princelings. It is important, however, to keep track of right and left, which should help prevent cases of over-removal. Also, since punishment deters crime, we recommend posting easy-to-remember warnings, such as "Break our laws, Lose your paws."

2. Non-Saudi foreign workers are like so many braying camels as they complain about entrapment and servitude. We suggest imprisoning more of them.

3. While we respect the traditional rule that one man's testimony in trial is equivalent to that of two women, it undervalues a woman's testimony and may result in unfair trials. Our research, using a more calibrated measurement system, suggests that the true ratio is not 1:2 but something closer to 1:1.84.

4. For crimes of homosexuality, justice officials who currently prefer the term "hell-bound man-loving-man monster" are advised to use a more neutral term such as "gay." To be sure, beheading is entirely appropriate for men who love men and should continue, but there is no need for homophobic language.

5. Who would abolish stoning? Not us, but we suggest that enthusiasts refrain from being overly loud about it. Meddling foreign devils do not understand that stoning, done correctly, is humane and not a big deal.

6. We esteem our courts, but may we suggest that during the trial phase only the prosecuting attorney and judge be permitted to administer beatings to the defendant? Ideally, the defense attorney should wait until after the verdict is read.

the weekly
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MARCH 22, 2004

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Bad Polic[illegible]

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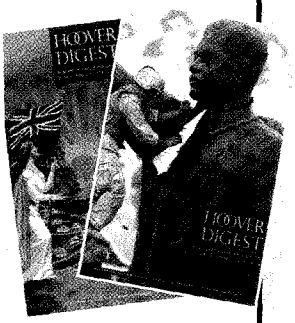

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The Depart[illegible] a few weeks [illegible] that Oracle's takeover of PeopleSoft violates antitrust law, stating that "we believe this transaction is anti-competitive—pure and simple." Ironically, in the same week the Supreme Court, in *United States Postal Service v. Flamingo Industries,* decided that the massive United States Postal Service is exempt from all antitrust laws. Yet **anticompetitive behavior by the Postal Service is more harmful to consumers, competitors, and the overall economy than most private sector mergers.**

The Postal Service enjoys a government-enforced monopoly over the delivery of all letters. Yet it competes in a wide and increasing array of businesses in which private firms are already active, including package and express delivery; it has recently ventured into selling a variety of retail merchandise and e-commerce services (most of which are unrelated to postal services).

A major concern is that the Postal Service will use funds from monopolized delivery services, where it holds customers captive, to underprice in businesses where it faces competition. Given that the final authority to set rates rests not with its regulator, the Postal Rate Commission, but with the Postal Service itself, that fear is justified. Moreover, the best available estimates (given the Postal Service's poor accounting data) indicate that it has earned losses on many products where it faces competition. Underpricing is thus nearly a certainty.

Various other concerns have arisen about the Postal Service's competitive activities. In addition to monopoly power, it is exempt from all taxation. It can borrow from the Treasury at government-guaranteed rates. It has the power of eminent domain and is excused from SEC disclosure requirements. It is not required to pay parking tickets or registration fees on its vehicles. It is immune from antitrust laws and is not subject to Federal Trade Commission truth-in-advertising regulations, meaning that it can assert anything it wishes in ads.

All those valuable government-bestowed privileges allow the Postal Service to inefficiently and unfairly compete with private firms. **The Postal Service is able to force private firms out of business by virtue of its special privileges**, rather than through superior management acumen, better labor relations, or indeed any business-related skills. It can offer any competitive service it wishes at any time at any price without any regulatory oversight whatsoever.

This is bad policy. Consumers will be hurt because the costs of those ventures will be passed on to them through higher rates in monopolized activities and because they will face less choice after the Postal Service has forced competitors out of business. Competitors will go out of business, shrink, or not start up in the first place in the face of unfair competition from the Postal Service. Finally, state and local governments will lose tax revenue when the Postal Service forces out taxpaying businesses.

The executive and legislative branches should act. The Postal Service ought to be kept out of competitive activities entirely. Better still, it should be relieved of all government-granted privileges, including monopoly power. This situation is anticompetitive, pure and simple, and it should be changed.

—Rick Geddes

Rick Geddes is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and assistant professor in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University. Geddes is the editor of Competing with the Government: Anticompetitive Behavior and Public Enterprises (Hoover Press, 2004).

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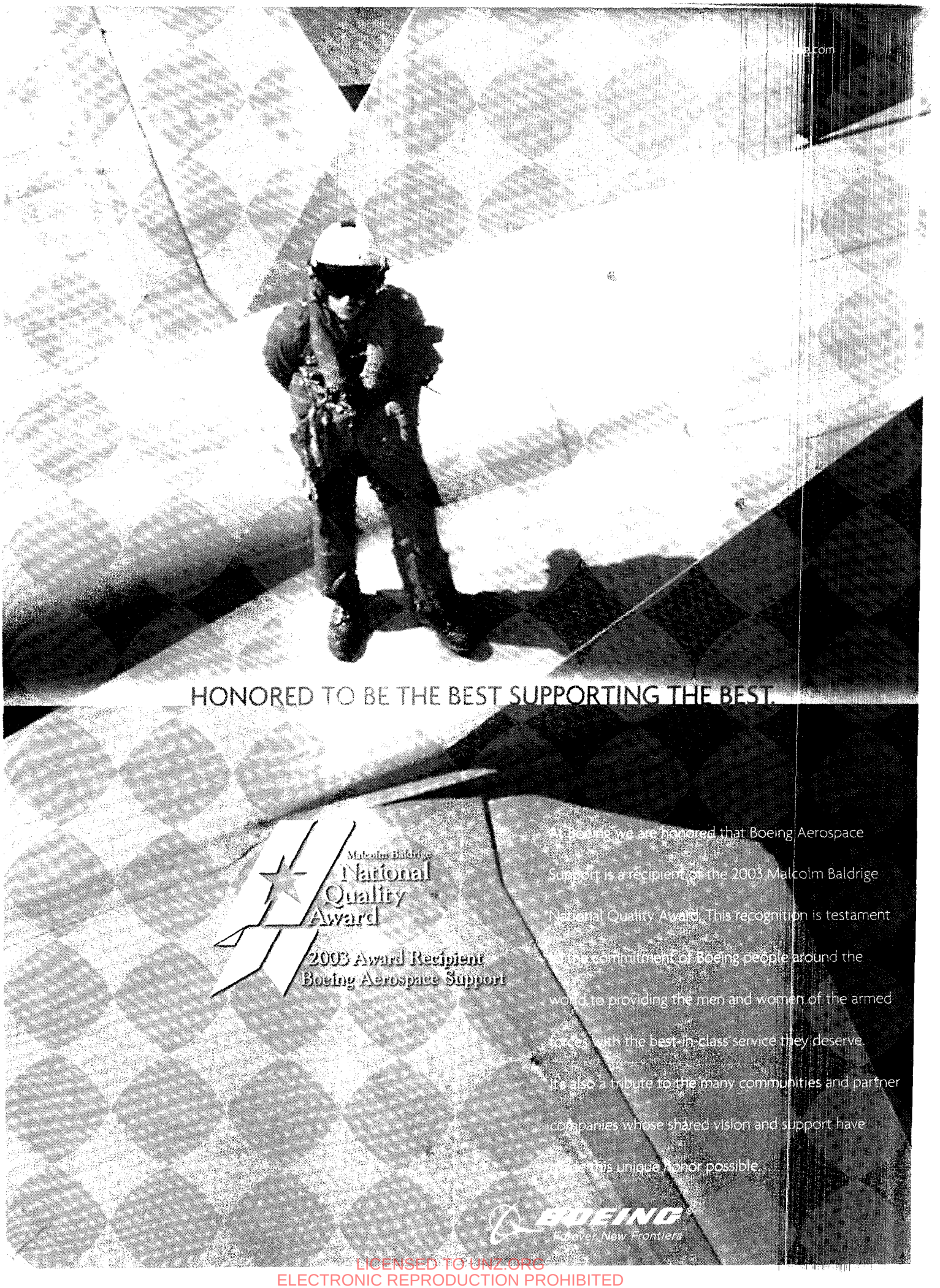

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